THE ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

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Some of the Contents

COMMENTARY
Sir Charles Petrie, Bt.

GREECE'S LEADERS ARE HER KING AND QUEEN **Keith Butler**

WAS THE GERMAN ARMY PREPARED FOR WAR IN 1939? **General Siegfried Westaphal**

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"TYPICAL DOMINICA" **Alec Waugh**

LETTER TO A MEMBER FOR OXFORD UNIVERSITY—No. VI. **Algernon Cecil**

Other important contributions by:—**Francis Russell, George Roderick, Russell Kirk, Christopher Sykes, David Douglas, Arnold Lunn, etc., etc.**

MONTHLY 1/6

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ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

Edited by DOUGLAS JERROLD

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THE

ENGLISH REVIEW MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER COMMENTARY

AS autumn deepens into winter, events, both at home and abroad, begin to move at an accelerated pace, and the short breathing space of August and September recedes into a distance which already seems remote. The long-drawn-out struggle between Stalin and Tito is clearly reaching a climax, though whether Russia will be compelled to assert her authority in Jugoslavia by force of arms is, at the moment of writing, still uncertain; what is clear, and has been repeatedly stressed in these pages, is that a term must be put to Tito's insubordination or else the whole of Eastern Europe will become infected. In the Far East the Communist grip on China is being tightened, and Japan is rapidly becoming what she has always claimed to be, namely, the bulwark of resistance to Communism in that area.

At home the British Government is markedly reluctant to ask the electors to pass judgment upon its record, and the longer a General Election is postponed the greater harm is done to the economy of the country by continued uncertainty as to its result; though, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten that every month which passes without an appeal to the country means more money into the pockets of not a few Members of Parliament who may well have to find an alternative source of livelihood after the next General Election. It is not to be suggested for one moment that such a state of affairs would affect the decision of the Prime Minister, but it may not be wholly absent from the minds of some of his counsellors.

FIRST of all, let us take the situation in South-East Europe. The more closely it is examined the more precarious does the position of Tito appear. He has alienated Stalin beyond hope of reconciliation, and he has been a Communist too long to be under any illusions regarding the lengths to which that evil man will go in the destruction of an enemy; the precedent of Trotsky is hardly reassuring. It is true that the Western Powers are giving Jugoslavia some economic support, but they have made it quite clear that they are not prepared to go to war on her behalf, and it is of military assistance that Tito is most in need. In any event, so long as he pursues a Communist policy at home his relations with London, Paris and Washington are hardly likely to be cordial.

The imponderable factor is the amount of support which Tito enjoys among his own people, and on this point the evidence is contradictory. "Better the devil we know than the devil we don't" is probably the attitude of the larger part of the Jugoslav population, but it is not very reassuring to a man who is facing the irate master of two hundred million subjects. In all the circumstances, and not forgetting the lessons of 1915 and 1941, it is hard to resist the conclusion that if Jugoslavia is seriously attacked she will not be able to hold out for long.

HER only hope, and a very slender one at that, is that Russia may refrain from a direct attack. Stalin must know that if he wants to crush Tito by force of arms he will have to employ his own troops. Quite apart from the danger of arming the satellite countries, there are not enough Bulgarians for the purpose, the Hungarians are politically unreliable, and the Rumanians would be militarily useless. If the job has to be done at all it will have to be done by the Russians themselves, and it may be that the realization of this fact will cause Stalin to hesitate; all depends on whether he is prepared to risk a Third World War.

It is true that the Western Powers would not intervene to save Jugoslavia, but they could hardly view with indifference the presence of Russian armies on the shores of the Adriatic. In that event a mere spark might start a conflagration, a fact of which Stalin is perfectly well aware. Therefore, it is probably safe to say that direct intervention will not be attempted until every other method of liquidating Tito has failed, but liquidated somehow he must be, or the blow to Russian prestige all over Eastern Europe will be irreparable.

ON more than one ground Tito's insubordination is an embarrassment to the Kremlin, for all the indications point to a desire on the part of the oligarchs in Moscow to let sleeping dogs lie in Europe, a policy which would possess the double advantage of lulling the Western Powers into a false sense of security and of enabling Russia to exploit to the full the very favourable situation which is developing for her in Asia. Complications on the Danube or the Save might prove extremely inconvenient, and might place an excessive strain even upon the resources of Russia.

It has never been the policy of that country to be active both in the East and the West at the same time. To-day it is quite clear that the Western Powers are fully alive to the dangers of Russian aggression in Europe, and that they have agreed upon the measures to stop it. In Asia there is very little that they can do, and they seem doomed to be idle spectators of the subjection of that whole continent, including the quondam Indian Empire, to Communism. Such being the case, what would suit Russia best would be a decade of relative peace in Europe while she digested the meal which is so tastily being prepared for her in Asia.

BUT, it may be asked, what of the atom bomb? To which one is tempted to reply, what of it? Russia was bound to discover the secret sooner or later, and it is surely of little significance that she should have done so sooner rather than later. Indeed, it is by no means impossible to argue that now both potential antagonists, the United States and Russia, possess this new weapon there is very little chance of it being employed by either. The precedent of gas in the late war at once occurs to the mind.

Where the danger surely lies is in the arguments which are already being put forward by the enthusiasts of the bigger-and-better-bombs school. Undeterred by the disastrous effects of the adoption of their fallacies in the past, these sadistic fanatics of total war envisage a struggle in which the participants will smother one another with atomic bombs until civilization itself disappears in an orgy of insensate destruction. What the Russian discovery of the secret really means is that it is no longer possible to think of the obliteration of the Muscovite hordes by bombing from the air; rather must they be defeated on the ground by troops, inferior in numbers, but superior in training and equipment. In other words, now that Russia has the atom bomb the argument, put forward in this place last month, for the creation of a professional army has become irresistible.

IN this respect the latest comparative figures are far from reassuring. Somewhat late in the year, one would have thought, two

British divisions, one armoured, the other an infantry division, have been carrying out manoeuvres in North Germany on the divisional scale. These represent practically the entire British force that could be put in the field on the mainland of Europe if war were to break out. The American occupying troops might make up another two divisions, so that between them Great Britain and the United States could not rely upon a mobile strength of more than 120,000 men.

As against this we have the statement last month of General Omar Bradley to the House of Representatives' Armed Services Committee at Washington. He estimated that at the present time Russia had 175 combat divisions under arms with a total air strength of 16,000 planes. He went on to say that in his opinion she could put 300 divisions into the field within sixty days, and 502 divisions within a few months. If these figures are even approximately correct, it is to be hoped that full advantage will be taken of any breathing-space that may be accorded to us in the West.

AN interesting sidelight on life behind the Iron Curtain is contained in a letter from Stockholm. In a German prisoner of war camp in Georgia an imprisoned clergyman was given permission to preach from time to time to his comrades, on condition that a written copy of the sermon was approved by the Russian commandant of the camp. On one occasion the pastor chose a text from St. Paul's (Paulus in German) epistle to the Romans. "What has Paulus to write to the Fascists?" angrily exclaimed the Russian official, and struck out the text.

Some weeks later the clergyman in question was summoned to the Kommandantura and cautioned not to tell any lies in future, as General Fieldmarshal Paulus had been interrogated in Officer Camp 27/II on the subject of his letter to the citizens of Rome, and had emphatically denied that he had ever written to them at all.

NEARER home, one of the more important events of the month has been the announcement of the Prime Minister that there will not be a General Election this year. No one will question his right to take this decision, but many, especially among his own followers, will doubt its wisdom. That uncertainty which does so much harm to business is only postponed until the New Year, when it will again become the dominant factor of the national life. Mr. Attlee would have more claim upon our gratitude had he told us when the election would, rather than when it would not, take place. In any event the story of the devaluation of the pound has done much to detract from the effectiveness of ministerial denials.

Whether the Prime Minister was well-advised from the point of view of his own party time alone can show, but the enthusiasm with which his decision was greeted by the vast majority of the delegates at the Conservative Conference can hardly have been reassuring to Transport House, nor, for that matter, can the precedent of Mr. Balfour in the opening years of the century. Shrewd electoral observers of long experience went about Earl's Court saying that every month the election is postponed is worth ten seats to the Conservative party. In Lancashire, London, the Home Counties, the West Country, and East Anglia the Government prestige is very low; delay will enable the Conservative case to be adequately put in the Midlands, Yorkshire and Tyneside where are the Socialist strongholds.

OF Mr. Attlee's colleagues, the coming months are likely to show that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has become, for personal reasons, an increasing liability to the Government. Devaluation may or may not have been necessary—the problem is argued elsewhere in this number—but Sir Stafford Cripps was not the man to have assumed responsibility for it. After his repeated denials that there would be devaluation he should have resigned, and let another carry out the

new policy. The sudden *volte-face* has done irreparable harm to his own reputation, and vicariously to the administration of which he is so prominent a member.

There are innumerable examples in British political history of a minister, although convinced that some policy which he had supported now required reversal, resigning rather than advocate what he had hitherto opposed, and it is a pity that Sir Stafford Cripps did not take this course. He has lost greatly in moral stature by what he has done. It would probably surprise many members of the Government, and possibly even a few of the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench, if they were to hear the views of the man-in-the-street upon the way in which devaluation was effected, and upon the minister who is generally considered to have been primarily responsible. A great shock has been given to the faith of the British people in their leaders.

ON the other hand, even his political opponents must surely admit that Mr. Winston Churchill has rarely risen to an occasion as he rose to that provided by the great meeting which he addressed at the Empress Hall in the middle of last month. It would have been so easy to put a foot wrong or to sound a false note. Ten thousand people, wrought up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, were prepared to accept as gospel anything that he said, and a lesser man would have been carried away by the frantic acclamations of his audience. One can imagine the effect which such a setting would have produced upon the utterances of, say, Hitler—or Mr. Aneurin Bevan.

Mr. Churchill, however, resisted every temptation to play to the gallery, and contented himself with a sober analysis of our present discontents and of the Conservative policy in relation to them. He did not, as indeed he could not, produce a detailed programme; what he asked for was a doctor's mandate, and he asked for it in the tones of a statesman. The effect of even the most successful meeting is transitory, but no one who was at Earl's Court that night is likely to forget the occasion. Mr. Churchill has doubtless many more triumphs ahead of him, but his restraint that evening is the greatest tribute to his statesmanship.

THE speech was not only the culmination of a memorable conference, but was wholly in accordance with the spirit of it. There was a marked difference between this gathering and its predecessors at Blackpool, Brighton and Llandudno; then the Conservative party had little hope of any immediate return to power, and its members could indulge in a certain amount of that irresponsibility of utterance which is the prerogative of a party in opposition. To-day the situation is very different, for to quote a leading article in the *Sunday Times*, "the Government's stock, to every close political observer, seems to be declining steadily in the country", and the time is not far distant when the Conservative party is more than likely to be again in office.

These changed circumstances were well reflected in the approach to the great problems of the day displayed by the assembled delegates at Earl's Court. There was a seriousness and a sense of coming responsibility which could not be ignored, and there was a marked impatience with the very few speakers who were foolish enough to indulge in levity or facetiousness. In this connection those of the older generation who fear the impetuosity of youth can derive consolation from the large number of Young Conservatives who participated in these proceedings. There was nothing wild, and still less was there anything woolly, about their utterances; incidentally, they left no doubt of their approval of Mr. Churchill's commendation of the word Tory.

ONE problem, however, the Conservative party will have to face, and that is the size of these annual conferences, which renders it impossible for the participants to confer at all. To get through the agenda it is

now necessary to telescope resolutions and to limit speeches to half a dozen sentences shouted through a microphone. On the other hand, any proposal to reduce the number of representatives which the local associations may send would be extremely unpopular, while the vast concourse which assembles for the mass meeting at the end of the conference serves a highly important party purpose.

The remedy may be found to lie in the conference dividing itself into a number of sections, each of which would deal with one particular aspect of policy; these sections would meet in different places, but their members would combine for the mass meeting at the close of their deliberations. Already this procedure is being adopted in a tentative way, for a meeting to discuss the problems of Local Government was held previous to, and apart from, the main conference, and there would not appear to be any reason why the practice should not spread. The thing to be avoided is the transformation of the conference into a rally.

OF the actual decisions taken at Earl's Court by far the most important, both from the national and the party standpoint, was the reiteration by Sir David Maxwell Fyfe of the promise in the *Right Road for Britain* that one of the first tasks of the Conservative party when it returns to power will be to call a round-table conference where questions concerning Trade Union practice can be frankly and freely discussed.

This declaration should serve three extremely useful purposes. First of all it should prove to organized labour in this country that the Conservative party is not just another name for a capitalist conspiracy. Secondly, it should reassure the timid voter who fears that a Conservative Government would mean a head-on clash with the Trade Unions, and something very close to civil war. Thirdly, which it was certainly intended to do, it should cut the ground from under the feet of the Socialist propagandists who are asserting that Tory rule means unemployment, low wages, and bad conditions of work.

It is clear that restrictive practices, of whatever kind, must be brought to an end, and this can only be done by agreement. Unilateral action of the type only too often adopted by the present Government can only make matters worse.

SO much for the events of the past month. In the present number of this *Review* will be found a consideration of various topical subjects which can but give us furiously to think. Apart from the financial situation, which is carefully examined, there is an article on the part which the monarchy is playing in the revival of Greece; another on the West Indian colony of Dominica; and a third which will remove many misconceptions regarding an important aspect of American life. In each case the approach is factual, and it will hardly be denied that the writers have produced a mass of extremely valuable information in support of their respective contentions.

In a slightly different field General Westaphal will doubtless give rise to a good deal of controversy regarding the opening phases of the Second World War, and his disclosures surely strengthen the case for a British Army capable of taking the offensive as soon as a war begins. Equally controversial —and topical—is the article on Housing, which raises the question of providing real homes as well as mere living accommodation. Finally, Mr. Algernon Cecil says farewell, until after the General Election, to a Member for Oxford University.

CHARLES PETRIE.

The Greek Royal Family—King Paul, Queen Frederica, Prince George (The King's Uncle) and Commander-in-Chief General Papagos, with the Royal children—Prince Sophie, Princess Irene and Crown Prince Constantine (in Wolf Cubs' uniform).

GREECE'S LEADERS ARE HER KING AND QUEEN

By KEITH BUTLER

"WHAT, in your view, *is* the position of a King in Greece?" As I asked King Paul the challenging question he smiled and then answered seriously. Knowing his work in Greece these last three years, I was sure he was the type of modern, democratic monarch of whom I could ask such a question. In truth, he seemed to welcome it.

But behind the question lay a long and stormy Greek internal controversy. The question of the regime in Greece has been a thorny one ever since the modern kingdom was founded in 1832, following the Greeks' victorious War of Liberation against the four hundred-year-old Turkish domination. Placed uneasily upon the new Greek throne by the Allied Powers after the Conference of London, eighteen-year-old King Otho of Bavaria felt himself a foreigner and ruled like one. After a bare ten years of rule, he found himself forced by the Athens revolution of 1843 to accord his liberty-lusting Greek subjects a constitution. The reign of Bavarian

Otho lasted till 1862. A more serious revolution drove him from his throne, overthrew the Bavarian dynasty and sent Otho into an exile in which he died in 1867.

THE present dynasty began its fluctuating tenure of the Greek throne in 1863, with the proclamation of Prince William of Denmark as George I, King of the Hellenes. Amongst other candidates considered by the Allies who even then controlled Greece's fortunes, the Earl of Derby narrowly escaped the insecure privilege and permanent headache of wearing the thorny Greek Crown. As events developed the Danish dynasty has maintained its position as the Greek ruling house, with changeable fortune and popularity, until to-day. George I was assassinated at Salonika in 1913. His successor and son, King Constantine, despite considerable personal popularity, was obliged by the Western Allies, the influence of the Liberal Greek statesman, Eleftherios Venizelos, and by a sudden swing of Greek public opinion, to leave in 1917. His son, Alexander, led a lonely life as King until his young life was cut short, in 1920, by the effects of a tame monkey's bite. King Constantine came back to the throne and to popular esteem until 1922, when his Army's defeat in the ill-starred Asia Minor expedition lost the Greeks Smyrna and the flower of their army. The blow to public morale also lost King Constantine his throne and brought to replace him his eldest son, the late King George II.

Serious, aloof, well-meaning, but lacking completely the common touch that warms, King George II had more than his bitter fill of the ups and downs of Balkan kingship. His first period of rule lasted only a few months between 1922 and 1923. From 1924 until 1935 Greece tried a Republican constitution dominated mainly by the personality of Venizelos. Then in 1935 King George II was brought back to the Greek throne, surely not eagerly, but from his acute sense of public duty in response to the demand of the Greek people.

THE Greek monarchy from 1935 until the Axis invasion of 1940-41 was linked with the name of the dictator John Metaxas. His was a regime, if not of terror, at least of the suppression of liberal thought and traditions in Greece. King George II's name was ever linked with the dictatorship and lost popular esteem as a result, even though to-day's political and parliamentary nadir has brought many Greeks of liberal mind to wish for a period of Metaxas dictatorship as a necessary discipline for the nation. Axis occupation forced the Royal Family to flee Greece. During their absence, the British Government promised that at the peace the Greek people would again have the opportunity to decide on the question of regime.

Whether or not it was the deciding factor, there is no doubt that the Russian Communist menace—Greece had had a taste of bloody Communist terrorism in the Revolution of December, 1944—had an important influence in the 1946 plebiscite that brought King George II back to his throne. But he had not the personality ever to be popular—conscientious constitutional monarch though he was—and his much regretted death on 1st April, 1947, was, in fact, a providential event for the modern history of the Greek Monarchy. It launched the Crown on a completely new cycle of Greek constitutional rule. The Royal partnership of Paul and Frederica which began on 1st April, 1947, has given birth to a new spirit in the Greek kingdom. Probably never before—not even in the most popular periods of King Constantine's regime—have the Greek people and their King and Queen come so close together. Certainly never before in modern Greek history—and probably seldom in the general history of constitutional monarchy—have the King and Queen been able to step so successfully into the gap left by the general inadequacy of Greek political and parliamentary life at the present critical time. Beset by so many problems—political, economic, strategic, social—which all added up to a nation-felt battle for survival in the face of

the giant Russo-Slav conspiracy, the Greeks sought leadership. The political world failed utterly to rise to the national need. When it failed, King Paul and Queen Frederica stepped in to fill the breach in leadership. And they brought an irresistible partnership of brains, instinct, courage and honesty. Wherever they have moved throughout their country the Greek people has responded to these qualities. The old Republican-*versus*-Monarchy controversy has been shown out-dated and has been abandoned. The Crown has become a national rallying point as never before. This is the first great contribution that King Paul and his Queen, as a crowned partnership, have brought to the Greek nation.

THEIR chance was provided by the failure of the political personalities. Queen Frederica told me that what led her, soon after becoming Queen, to inaugurate the "Queen's Fund for Northern Greece", was her vivid consciousness, after a tour through the poverty and suffering in the guerilla war-hit areas of Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace, of the utter failure of the Government to organize any kind of relief for this important section of the productive community. She realized that continued suffering through State inefficiency and inadequacy was providing the best breeding ground for Communism. "I was always a bit rebellious," she told me. "As Crown Princess I had to do what I was told usually. Now, as Queen, I was less easily subdued. On this question something had to be done. If the Government couldn't, I would. I started my fund."

Calling together all sections of the nation's economic and social life—bankers, industrialists, professional men, workers, trades unionists, shop-keepers, educationists—the Queen welded them by the force of her personality and ideas into an efficient welfare and relief organization for fighting misery and despair amongst the guerilla-raided population. It was through the work of the Queen's Fund only that the tremendous burden of the 700,000 refugees from the guerilla war—one in ten of the population—was shouldered by the rest of the nation until the Government and the American Aid took over some of the strain. Had it not been for the initial readiness of the Queen's Fund, Markos' Communist war of attrition—economic and social—might well have attained its end. Greece might have drifted behind the Iron Curtain through sheer internal economic, social and moral disintegration.

Personality, ideas, leadership and glowing patriotism are the qualities in the Queen that have overcome all resistance to her plans and persuasiveness wherever she has gone. While every section of Greek life was giving its contribution to the Queen's Fund, the labour leaders were at a loss as to what they could afford to give. At the last, the great idea dawned on their anxious minds. The whole Greek working class gave one day's work to the Queen's Fund. All their wages for that day went to the relief of the guerilla-stricken.

IN 1946, as Crown Princess, Frederica had gone to Macedonia. Near a little village in the Kalamaria region, known then for its Communist tendencies and anti-Royalist sympathies from time past, the Crown Princess stopped her car. With a Lady-in-Waiting she went into a cottage, unrecognized. Without ceremony Frederica told the peasant woman: "I'm so tired. Could you give me a little water, please?" The woman brought her water and the customary spoonful of syrupy sweet. Said Frederica: "It's a delicious sweet. Could you send me some at home—to the Palace. I'll send you some of mine, but it's not nearly so good." Crowding round, the villagers were amazed to realize it was the future Queen among them, unafraid to mix with them, talk with them and even eat food offered by them. Their propaganda, from the Communists, had told them vastly different things about "Friki". After she had gone the village shop had a special window display. In the centre was a portrait of Crown Princess Frederica. Flanking her on either side were

portraits of Nicholas Zachariades, leader of the Greek Communist Party, and Stalin.

As Queen, Frederica was not daunted by any risks in her movement amongst her suffering people. After the battle for Konitsa, the Greek frontier town besieged by the guerillas at the beginning of 1947, the Queen was in the first jeep to pass with the liberating Greek Army along the cursorily mine-swept road into the battered town. Seeing her in their midst the troops and townspeople were speechless at first. Then they began to weep. "And I found myself weeping, too", said Frederica. She told the officers of the garrison: "You all know how the King, who is very sick, loves me. But it seems he loves you more, for he has sent me to you."

ONE of her greatest gifts is instinct coupled with intelligence. Not only in Greece, but also in London, Queen Frederica outshone the diplomats in her presentation of Greece's case. In London for the Royal Wedding, her slaves were Mr. Winston Churchill and General Marshall. Churchill was observed to be in a constant state of wonder at the combination of so much charm and intelligence. It is this combination that has broken down the traditionally rooted antagonism of scores of Greece's die-hard Republican anti-Monarchists. They have been won, not for the Crown, but for the unity of the Greek people under the Crown. Both the King and the Queen have striven with considerable success to break down the old destructive division of the Greek nation into Republicans and Royalists, on a party basis on each side. Their democratic way of life, easy gift of mixing and identity of sympathy with the soldiers and peasants amongst whom they move constantly have done much to win a personal respect and affection which has displaced the old antipathies.

But Queen Frederica's greatest contribution to her people has been her saving of the Greek children. It was in February last year that guerilla chief Markos Vafiades announced the Cominform's plan to launch the most inhuman and destructive blow yet against the Greek people. The radio stations of the guerillas and the Balkan satellites broadcast that from then on the guerilla army aimed to abduct 80,000 Greek children from Greek territory, to be brought up in the Cominform States. No doctrinaire justifications could disguise this plan as anything other than the crime of genocide, condemned at the Nuremburg Trial of Nazi war criminals. Nothing could hide the fact that it was a deliberate final effort to destroy the Greek people and cow them into surrender to the Communist minority using their children as hostages. Despair clutched at the hearts of Greek parents in all the regions so frequently raided by Markos' bands. During two years the guerillas did succeed in abducting some 30,000 Greek children who are now being brought up as Communists in the Eastern Block States, probably to be launched back in attacks against their motherland. Some of them in their early 'teens, were in fact sent back to the Greek mountains to fill the gaps wrought by the Greek Army in the guerillas' ranks. Again the Government seemed unable to meet the situation effectively. Again the Queen stepped into the breach.

THE "Queen's Fund" was diverted to provide the means to rescue and remove to safer parts of Greece those children who lay in the path of the abducting guerillas. With the help of voluntary organizations and organs of the State, with money provided by rich and poor, with services provided by anyone who had the will and the ability, the Queen rescued some 18,000 Greek children from the guerilla-threatened areas. Only those handed to the care of the Fund voluntarily by their parents were taken, and not all those could be catered for. But throughout the islands and the safe areas of central and southern Greece, forty-eight "Children's Cities" were set up. In them the refugee children were housed, clothed, fed, given medical care and schooling, and generally

cared for until such time as the internal security situation should permit of their return home. But for the work of the "Queen's Fund", these children would either have been kidnapped by the guerillas; or they would be living for years in the squalor of the refugee camps, a prey to T.B., starving, unschooled and wild. In the "Children's Towns" they are given a healthy, non-luxurious, organized life, which will not unfit them for return to their villages and which will have taught them some basis of citizenship through team-work and team-games.

Already, following on the army's recent victories, children from the "Children's Cities" are being sent back where there are homes for them to go to and where their parents have left the refugee camps to return to their villages. And the Queen's work enters a new phase.

Following the end of the guerilla war inside Greece's frontiers, Greek thoughts have turned towards the delayed reconstruction and rehabilitation of the national life in all its aspects. The guerilla war has taken a heavy toll in life and material damage. It has also taken a toll in psychological and moral damage amongst the abducted youth of the country. The nation is faced with the problem of how to re-adapt to normal peaceful, productive civic life the thousands of young boys and girls who had been abducted by the guerillas and have only now been recaptured or have surrendered to the Greek army. These youngsters have known nothing but the wild life of guerillas in the Greek mountains for months and even years. They have been taught to hate and to kill. In their early 'teens they have known the power over life and death from the feel of a machine-gun in their hands. They have been given the first tests of blood—deliberately, by their captor-leaders. They have taken part in the most cruel atrocities on the living bodies of captured fellow-Greeks. They have been filled with the Communist propaganda of resentment, hate and revenge. They have known a raw life of primitive emotions and hardship. They have been made into social misfits.

THE reabsorption into the national life of thousands of Greek youngsters with this background has been the latest problem to which the King and Queen of the Hellenes have addressed themselves. Again, theirs has been the lead. Preoccupied with the giant problems of the refugees and the children's settlements, the Queen is just now tackling the problem of the young Greek girls who are now thronging the Greek army prison cages after serving, living and fighting with the Communist guerillas. In Crete she is setting up a special girls' rehabilitation school, where these unhappy girl misfits will learn again the advantages of an organized, civilized, democratic community life. They will be taught cooking, sewing, dressmaking, housekeeping and baby-craft. After a year or so, it is hoped they will be able to take their place in the nation without being a danger to its security or being treated as pariahs by the rest of society that suffered so terribly from the guerilla campaign. Whether they were with the guerillas by choice or by force—most started their mountain life at least through forcible abduction—these ex-guerilla girls still need the kind of rehabilitation the Queen's plan will give them to refit them for productive life in the reconstructive nation.

On the Dodecanese Island of Leros King Paul has already started the equivalent institution for the ex-guerilla boys. In the special Boys' Technical School there some 1,200 former guerilla boys aged between eleven and twenty years are learning in practice and by example to become valuable citizens of the Greek State. At Leros there is not—and there will not be in the Queen's School in Crete—any political propaganda. The fallacies in the Communist teachings to which these children have been subjected are allowed to reveal themselves in the everyday democratic life, the example of the carefully chosen instructors—many of them instructors from the Greek Boy Scout Movement—and

the Sunday religious services of the School. Housed in the repaired buildings of the former Italian seaplane base on Leros, these boys already after seven months of training and life on the Scouting pattern and ideals are unrecognizable as the wild, rebellious, uncivilized, bitter mob who arrived there at first. It is hoped that many will be fit to return to their villages and normal life after a year's retraining. And each boy will return with a trade at his finger-tips—plumbing, electrical engineering, motor mechanics, boat-building, shoe-repairing. The School is getting ready to expand up to 5,000 strong with the arrival of the ex-guerilla boys from the Grammos and Vitsi campaigns.

TO both the Leros running school and the projected one on Crete, the boys and girls go from the prison cages of their own choice. They are offered the chance to learn a trade and to live a healthy life. The Schools are assisted by the State, but are financed by voluntary funds coming mainly from the "Queen's Fund". The Leros School was entirely the King's idea. He got it, he told me, from reading in *Reader's Digest* about the "Boys' Town" for child delinquents in the U.S.A. The idea was first tried out, under his encouragement, on the Sea-Boys amongst the Greek Navy mutineers in Egypt during World War II. The success of that experiment encouraged him to try the larger-scale and more vital one at Leros. From Leros, the rest of the world, facing the problem of the Communist Fifth Column inside Western Democracy, has much to learn.

King Paul's influence is felt right inside the constructive national life, especially with the forward-looking youth organizations. One of his first acts after becoming King was to found the "National Institute", of which, despite political criticism, he insists on remaining President. He says: "I sweated blood to get this going!" Under his leadership all sections of the national life have given money and support for the work of the National Institute. The Institute has set up Agricultural Schools all over Greece where young Greek farmers are being taught modern farming methods. Agriculture is still the basis of the Greek economy and will be for a long time to come. The National Institute has produced great progress in the backward Greek agricultural methods.

For the future both King Paul and Queen Frederica still have many plans for raising the standards of Greek social and moral life. The Queen still sees much to be done to help the women and children of backward, war-crippled Greece. The King leads the youth of the nation in its courageous, vigorous approach to the problems of the future. Working together for their country, the King and Queen are a perfect partnership, each completing the other. In audience, each refers to the other as "my husband" and "my wife". At the fighting front, a guerilla shell fell on an observation post the King and Queen had just left a minute before. A lady-in-waiting protested to the Queen that she should not expose herself to danger by accompanying the King to the front. Said Frederica: "I don't want to live another minute without my husband."

IT was on the basis of these achievements won during the last three years that King Paul answered my question: "What *is* the position of a King in Greece?"

With a smile crinkling the corners of his eyes, he looked at me and said thoughtfully: "I think that in Greece a King can be really creative—oddly enough, more, perhaps, than in any other country. It's because of the character of the Greek people. Democratic as they are, they seek a leader whom they can trust. When they find him they rally to him. And the Greek people have enormous forces of courage and constructiveness within them."

WAS THE GERMAN ARMY PREPARED FOR WAR IN 1939?

By GENERAL SIEGFRIED WESTAPHAL*

IN the following article facts only are stated. They are, moreover, facts fully supported by the statements made during the Nuremberg trials. The picture given is therefore in no way fanciful.

From the end of 1920 to the end of 1933, the strength of the German Army fully conformed with the provisions of the Versailles Treaty. During these thirteen years it numbered 4,000 officers and 96,000 other ranks. The former served for twenty-five years, the latter for twelve. The weapons also conformed during this period with the provisions of the Treaty. Therefore there were no heavy artillery or tanks. There was no "secret" armament industry. All permanent fortifications in the West had been dismantled. Only three armoured forts in East-Prussia remained, the fortifications of which were old-fashioned. The "Grosser Generalstab" had been dissolved. The "Truppenamt" (Personnel Department) that had taken its place by permission of the Allied Control Commission and which was incorporated in the Army H.Q. of the Reichswehr Ministry, was no longer an independent authority.

The military clauses of the Versailles Treaty were transgressed or evaded in the following matters. The Cavalry were equipped with light machine guns, which had not been sanctioned by the Allies. To meet any attack on German territory a frontier defence organization of a border defence was prepared along the Polish Frontier. For this purpose weapons were kept ready, which after the First World War had been withheld from delivery to the Allied Control Organs. However, they were kept hidden, not by the Army, but by national organizations. All such measures for frontier defence were taken in agreement with the Prussian and Reich Governments. Further, a limited number of officers were trained in the use of modern weapons at Russian Panzer and Flying Schools.

FOR the first time a mobilization was prepared in 1930. It was intended to treble the armed forces in case of an armed conflict with one of Germany's neighbours. It was to comprise twenty-one Infantry and three Cavalry Divisions. As the weapons were not sufficient, only the actual fighters were to be armed. For such an increase in case of war, in the first place such men were available as had terminated their twelve years' service. Every year 8,000 men left the Army in this way. In addition there were the "other disbandments" authorized by the Peace Treaty amounting to a further five per cent. Accordingly up to 1933 about 150,000 men in all had been discharged after they had been trained in the Reichswehr. Besides, there was a considerable number of ex-Service men of the First World War. The latter were, however, neither registered nor controlled in any way, nor had they taken part in any training manoeuvres.

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There did not exist any "secret" Luftwaffe yet.

Thus, during the period of the Weimar Republic the Army had practically kept itself completely within the limitations of Versailles. This changed fundamentally under Hitler. Before dealing with this it should be mentioned that the Disarmament Conference in Geneva in the autumn of 1932 had already agreed in principle to an increase in the strength of the German Army in adjustment to the standard of armament of the other European states. The idea was an army of 250,000 to 300,000. However, a final strength was not definitely fixed because in October, 1933, Hitler declared that Germany was leaving the League of Nations. He did this without first asking the German Army H.Q. for their opinion. The latter would have advised against taking such provocative action.

FROM 1934 onwards, the building up of Army and Luftwaffe proceeded. Both measures were first carried out somewhat *sub rosa*, i.e., without any official announcement. The fact, of course, could not remain hidden from foreign countries. The Army provided the complement for twenty-four divisions and set itself to motorizing parts of the Cavalry. The Army Command considered the trebling of the strength of the Army as the limit that could be achieved with the existing officers' and non-commissioned officers' corps, i.e., without unduly depreciating its efficiency. Hitler had other ideas. On 16th March, 1935, in connection with the reinstitution of compulsory military service, he announced the creation of an Army of thirty-six Divisions. The Army Command, who again had not been consulted, was surprised. They aimed at quality, whereas Hitler preferred quantity. We know now why he was in such a hurry. This discrepancy in their attitude underlay the differences of opinion between him and the General Staff, which later became greater and greater.

From now on rearmament was accelerated more and more, and finally went at a headlong rate. Nothing could keep pace with this precipitous development, neither the building of barracks nor the building up of the paramilitary organizations which were dissolved in 1919 and had never been re-established. Also the training of new officers and N.C.Os. could not keep pace. Every year the cadres of the Divisions had to be broken down in order to build up new divisions. Every squadron, company or battery had to be divided two or three times so that new units could be developed. From this, not only the training, but also the inner structure suffered. The façade, especially at parades, disguised many inherent defects. This was true also of the Panzer force which was developing partly along the ideas of the British General Fuller, but this part of the Army got the best new personnel.

BEFORE the march into Austria in March 1938, a partial mobilization of the second Bavarian Army corps was ordered. This measure revealed very typically the standard of development in the preliminary work of mobilization. It proved without doubt that the paramilitary organizations were not yet up to standard, as indeed they could not be. Otherwise it would not have been possible for men long since dead to be called up. This little test showed further how small was the available number of trained men on the reserve. The bulk of the men called up consisted of veterans of the First World War. Their sons, who for the greater part had no training, saw their fathers being called up. In fact, there was no other possibility. Therefore, the Army Command had pointed out again and again, that before 1943 there could in no case be enough reservists to enable the scheduled units of the Field Army to be brought up to strength. Neither would it be possible before that year to guarantee the morale of an Army that had been increased so rapidly, despite these warnings matters took a different course.

Also the suggestions of the General Staff in regard to the Austrian Bund Army were

turned down. The General Staff had declared that it was desirable and acceptable to leave a wide amount of independence to the *Bundesheer*, and at the same time to retain and respect the old Austrian traditions, in the same way as had been the case with the Bavarian Army until 1918. It was suggested that the old names of units be retained; in Vienna there should be a Department of the General Staff. Contrary to these recommendations, however, everything was treated uniformly without any individual consideration. The *Bundesheer* (Austrian Army) was entirely disbanded, and subsequently only the 17th and 18th Army Corps were formed, consisting of the 44th and 45th Infantry, the 1st and 3rd Alpine, and the 9th Panzer Divisions. All this reorganization in many different spheres, the early mobilization of 1938 and other difficulties meant that the soldiers of the former *Bundesheer* had no rest even before the outbreak of the war. For this reason, their activity on all fronts during the war itself must be praised all the more highly.

FIVE years after the start of rearmament, the Second World War broke out. The Germany Army in September, 1939, already comprised ninety-eight Divisions and effective Brigades. An impressive number, but what did this fighting force of nearly one hundred Divisions really amount to? Fifty-two were regular (*aktiv*) Divisions (Group 1); fifteen were Reserve Divisions (Group 2); twenty-one were *Landwehr* Divisions (Group 3); and ten were substitute (*Ersatz*) Divisions (Group 4). The fifty-two units of Group 1, that is rather more than one half, were ready for immediate action, twelve of these being mechanized or motorized. Of the remaining forty-six Divisions, only the ten of Group 4 were partially effective from the middle of September. They consisted mainly of recruits serving four to eight weeks on the outbreak of war. The remaining thirty-six Divisions were essentially not ready for action at the front. Twenty-one of them, the *Landwehr* Divisions, were moreover very badly equipped and had, for instance, only three instead of twelve batteries of field artillery. In all these thirty-six Divisions no Company had more than fifteen regular professional soldiers. Owing to the lack of young reservists the majority of the men called up still consisted of men over forty, who had already fought in the First World War. The non-commissioned officers also had mostly fought in that war. The formation of the second and third groups proceeded at a pace that was so slow as to be positively alarming. The author himself raised a division of the second group, which on paper was actually accounted one of the best. It was nearly fourteen days after mobilization before the Division even got to its entraining station. On the first march to our positions dozens of horses broke their legs on the rough roads, only because inexperienced men were riding them.

More than eighty per cent of the peace time Army was used against Poland. These regular units were followed by a smaller number of divisions from groups two and three, but they were not in time to go into action. For the protection, therefore, of Germany's western frontier between Aachen and Basel there were available, apart from eight regular Divisions, only about thirty-two Divisions of Groups two and three. Against these the German Army Command assessed the French war potential at some one hundred Divisions. Against such a force some forty German Divisions, of which moreover almost threequarters were not yet ready to go into action, could not possible stand up. Moreover, the *Westwall* was unfinished, and was therefore indefensible. All thoughtful German officers then in the West were deeply concerned day and night over the risk of a French attack. In the Divisions of groups two and three, that is the greater proportion of the units then in the West, no Company or Battery had ever fired live ammunition, and the officers and men were not known to one another. They had as yet no confidence in each other or in their own military capacity.

BUT German weakness in the West at the beginning of the war must have been concealed from the French Commander-in-Chief, General Gamelin. He must apparently also have gravely overestimated the strength of the *Westwall*. There is no other explanation why the French Army stood by with their rifles piled. If it had attacked in force in September, 1939, it would have broken through to the Rhine. Until the end of September the main body of the German Army was engaged in Poland. It was naturally possible to withdraw some units before then, but continuous attacks upon the German internal railway system by the French and British Air Forces would inevitably have delayed their transport to the West long enough to prevent such units from arriving in time to dispute French possession of western Rhinish territory.

Let us assume that Hitler had succeeded, despite such a severe military and political reverse, in maintaining himself in power in Germany—let us further suppose that Hitler could have recovered all the lost territory by the spring of 1940; certainly he could not in that year have launched his great offensive against Holland, Belgium, and France, which made him master of those countries and even the occupation of Norway and Denmark would hardly have been possible. What would this have meant for the general position in Europe? France and Britain would have had time to develop their war machine to its full potential. They could have looked round at leisure for more allies. Their shipping could not have been threatened from German submarine bases in Norway and on the Atlantic coast. Italy would not have entered the war on Germany's side. Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary would have been unlikely to have allied themselves with Hitler.

IN a word, an attack in September, 1939, by a strong force of the French Army against the Divisions of Groups two and three, not yet battle trained, would have given an entirely different complexion to the Second World War, and would have decisively influenced its course, its extent, and its duration. Such an offensive, whereby alone France could have secured her war objective of helping her Polish allies, was not undertaken. Apart from a few limited local attacks near Saarbrucken, which by chance encountered regular German units, nothing of significance occurred, and in October the bulk of the Divisions of the peace time Army reached the West from Poland. These divisions, some of whom were indeed in sad need of recuperation, for the first time clothed with flesh and blood to what had hitherto been the bare bone of a defence system. Hitler made good use of the following seven months before the May offensive. During that period the Divisions of Groups 2 and 4 were carefully trained and became fully battle-worthy. Besides, additional groups of divisions were raised and equipped with war material looted in Poland. Thus on the 10th May, 1940, around one hundred and thirty now well-trained Divisions could proceed to the great offensive in the West. A unique opportunity to determine the fate of Europe differently at the very outset of the great war had been lost.

THE BOSTON MYTH

By FRANCIS RUSSELL

BEHIND its classical harbour fortifications it is a slovenly fading northern seaport. The myth would have it the most English of American cities, a rather whimsical British pale, where the values of a formal and traditional past have survived against the indeterminate welter of American life. Once it was the Athens of North America. Though its literary flowering is faded early Victorian history, it is still, according to this self-created legend, an older and more intimate trans-Atlantic London. Sometimes, wandering in the friendly little streets or spacious brick squares, one might imagine one's self strolling through some old-world cathedral town. Such unexpected glimpses are the Boston antiquarian's delight. The comparison is usually made between Louisburg and Russell Square. No book about Boston fails to mention that in the former several scenes were shot for a film version of *Vanity Fair*. Old Boston's underlying rhythm is an Anglican one. So much for the myth.

Boston the reality becomes a second-rate world metropolis. It is a sordid, violent urban nucleus with the impersonal glitter of its central boulevards masking the corruption of miles of dreary back streets. Eighty per cent of the city is a slum, dominated for some generations now by a free-booter Irish-American political machine. The casual visitor notices merely the shabbiness and the endless traffic jams, possibly the green windy expanse of the Common. From his standardized hotel room—like all other hotel rooms the country over—he looks down on the red and green winking traffic lights and wonders why Boston should be considered different from any other American city.

Bulfinch's gilt-domed Corinthian State House, if not the geographic centre is at least a measuring stick, a focal point for the rest of the city. Its mellow red brick front is of inexact but still pleasing proportions, with the later accretion of solid inappropriate marble wings, the whole having been compared by some outsiders to a ham sandwich. Within a ten-mile radius of that flashing centre there are one and a half million people living in the concentric rings of dormitory suburbs that surround the grimed Boston core—the Newtons, Brookline, Arlington, Melrose, Wellesley, Milton, Watertown, and so on. Here in the phalanxes of over-neat white wooden houses live the great bulk of the middle-class commuters who journey to and from the city to work each day. Boston proper, the bounded municipal area of Boston, has a population of only three-quarters of a million, most of them working class. It is a backwater edged by decay.

THE fraction of the Yankee plutocracy that has not migrated to the country club settlements beyond the suburbs is isolated in the Back Bay section. Locked away within the limits of that filled area, having long since abandoned even the thought of political control, these cautious and somewhat dessicated descendants of the bold-faced merchant-adventurers of the early nineteenth century form a business oligarchy that still administers and dominates the conservative city financial world. The Boston of State Street is secure. Culturally it is a dead city, but there are more estates being managed here in proportion to the population than anywhere else in the United States.

In the eighteenth century with the accession of the Royal governors in Massachusetts, Boston, from a narrow Puritan village, became a rising colonial capital. All social activity centred around the vice-regal residence at Province House where the governor

held his court. Life within this society was elegant in its small provincial way, with regimental scarlet and ceremony, whist, balls and theatrical entertainments. It was the one gay period when Boston could truly claim to be an English city.

The gaiety was of a hard Georgian variety that never wavered whatever the circumstances. Even during the seige of Boston when the city had been sealed off by the American lines in Roxbury there were subscription balls at Province House and receptions and amateur theatricals. In that final winter Voltaire's *Zara* was performed by the garrison officers. Not only did General Burgoyne himself write the prologue and epilogue, but in those last months he dashed off a play of his own called *The Blockade of Boston*. It was a farce, no copies of which have survived, poking fun at Washington and the Patriots, in which the daughters of leading Tory families played the women's parts. While the siege went on various Loyalist groups formed themselves into voluntary military organizations, among them—strange as it may seem for the later history of the city—the Loyal Irish Volunteers.

When finally on St. Patrick's Day 1776, under the threat of General Washington's guns on Dorchester Heights, South Boston, the British garrison marched to its ship with the regimental band of the Forty-Seventh lustily playing *The World Turned Upside Down*, Boston's English period came to an end and with it Boston society. As the ships set sail in a light flurry of snow against the gusty March winds there were in addition to the troops over a thousand civilians on board who preferred to abandon their homes and their possessions rather than renounce their loyalties.

AFTER the war Boston faced the periodic phenomenon of the emergence by default of a new ruling class, the smaller bourgeois merchants who now in a period of general prosperity made their way upward with a single-minded tenacity of purpose undisturbed by any profitless frivolities. This new society was, with a very few archaic exceptions such as "King" Hancock, in the neutral prudent tradition of dissent that had always as a matter of principle disapproved of the sparkle and the amusements of the aristocratic establishment.

It was a loose fluid period in which wealth came easily, when a young merchant's son could return from China at the age of twenty-one with a fortune founded for his descendants that would endure to the present, where the introduction of a power loom would establish a family-named textile dynasty.

For these newly-arrived merchants there was no other pattern to imitate when they set themselves up in the world than an English pattern. Their houses were fainter echoes of the brothers Adam, often elegantly so as in the work of the Salem wood-carver Samuel McIntyre. They imported English china, English silver, English clothes, English manners. The tradition of dissent was forgotten. In the New World the pattern had to be adapted by circumstances to a cruder and more violent atmosphere, and was unconsciously changed in the process. The basic conscious model, however, was still English, and this parvenu feeling that English ways were better—a very different thing from the pattern of life around the Colonial governor—was the real beginning of the Boston myth.

FOLLOWING the laws of its own development in a shifting society the new class consolidated and stabilized its position. The first generation was of self-made men, engrossed in their business, who considered it a mark of virtue to spend long hours at the desk or counter. Their views of culture were narrow and utilitarian, partly because their dominant position was still new to them, partly because they had an imbedded suspicion of the leisure activities of the old ruling class.

They in turn bred a new generation to whom life was wider than the counting house and for whom time was not money—for the money was already there—but freedom. These second and third generation merchant

sons took for granted education in their youth, leisure and the habit of leisure. Reflecting on the world about them they became articulate, and with their awareness of themselves the new class that they represented began to create its own art forms.

It was a turning point in the history of American culture, when Boston could almost have justified its adopted title of the Athens of North America—and in the spring-time of its flourishing, 1847, the year of the Great Hunger in Ireland, came like an invisible dividing line. The "coffin" ships put out of Cork were beginning to arrive at the Boston docks with beaten hopeless survivors who were ignored by everyone else, but welcomed as a source of cheap and docile labour by the rising industrial magnates. That this Irish disaster would eventually strike at the core of established Boston social and political life was an idea that neither the merchant class nor the emergent literary world ever entertained.

The liberal Protestant culture was expansive, hopeful, freed from its grim Calvinistic past, confident in the unlimited possibilities of a not too closely defined progress. Disregarded by it another culture was taking root in the yards and alleys of the festering port, an older more universal culture developing here in a stiff crypto-Jansenist form and with no more contact with the polite Boston literary world than if the Atlantic ocean still separated them. The later violent anti-Irish prejudice of the old Bostonians, allied with an earlier plebeian anti-Catholic feeling, grew up as an antithesis to the sudden arrival of these wretched immigrants of the Famine years. For the Irishmen who came to the United States then were the first mass immigrants. With them the whole modern sociological problem of assimilation began.

They came like cattle, the refuse of Cork and Kerry, Galway and Clare. Transported from their primitive earth-bound existence, fitted only for the most menial jobs, on landing they were forced to take whatever work they could find at hand, usually in a glutted market—or else starve. Sometimes they did starve in their reeking Paddyvilles and Mick Alleys where they lived in close bestiality among the first urban mass slums of America. Alone in this alien world across the sea they kept two things, their hatred and their clan spirit. Their hatred was of England, the age-old furious hatred of the Sassenach passed on from one generation to the next, remaining through the years green and irrelevant. Their clan spirit—inseparable from their religion—held them together, welded them into a solid political unit, sent their meagre savings back to the old country to bring over their cousins and their cousins' cousins in turn.

THE tragedy of the Irish in America was as great as the tragedy of the Famine years. But because they were dumb illiterate people who had lost hope long before they arrived, there are few tangible records to show their fate; only the oral tradition of personal suffering, warped, handed on to their children, persisting—for Irish racial memories are long. They were the butt of the social pyramid, the unfailing source of exploitable labour, ditch-diggers, stevedores, navvies, stable-boys They fed the expanding industries of the Merrimack by working fifteen hours a day, seven days a week. Boston was the centre of cheap labour for the country. Construction bosses all over America sent there for fresh supplies of Irish workers. The Paddies went as contract labourers in coaches with sealed doors, the curtains nailed across the windows. Along the Erie Canal and the new railway lines they died like flies. Jeremiah O'Donovan-Rossa wrote of "the wreck and ruin that came upon the Irish race in this foreign land".

Only gradually, in the less-stabilized fields of politics and construction, was there any escape, any opportunity for even a small minority of the Irish to change their status. During the filling in of the new Back Bay area and the large-scale building operations there, some of the more enterprising of the day labourers managed to take over the jobs of foremen and later a few even became

contractors. Irish political awareness commenced to percolate slowly through alley and precinct, a by-product at first of clan solidarity. Politics and contracting were beginning their close and permanent inter-connection in the city's modern development.

The most unbearable thing for an Irishman was not to live among other Irishmen. Politics were in their blood. In the sordid slums of East Boston, Southie, Charlestown, Washington Village, they founded Irish societies, political and athletic associations and informal gangs.

AT the outbreak of the Civil War the population of Boston was well over a third Irish and still growing. The drive to urban expansion came from these immigrant foreigners. Boston, from a coherent comprehensive town, was becoming an incoherent and incomprehensible metropolis. With the spreading out of the Irish within the city the creative impulse of the Boston literary world receded. The mood of the years after the war was autumnal, far removed from the April self-confidence of Longfellow and the Göttingen students of the previous generation.

No established rules seemed to apply to this expanding country, to these unassimilable foreigners whose uncouth solidarity turned the old crooked streets of Boston into a strange land. The intellectual minds with more sensitive perception felt the threat of the new forces undermining the stability of their familiar city, groped for some kind of security, some more permanent values than could be found in the disintegrating Boston scene. There was a sense of malaise, an antiquarian yearning toward an Anglican mother-country that had little in common with the industrial England of the mid-nineteenth century.

The retreat had begun. As Boston the culture-city declined the petrifaction of the mercantile-financial oligarchy followed. Native American Party candidates, the Know-Nothings, were elected mayors. The reaction of the Old Yankees to the rising tide of the Irish was to withdraw, to originate the so-called Boston Brahminism as a defence. Quite by accident the kindly Dr. Holmes had given them that convenient expression, although by Brahminism he had meant merely a disinterested bread-and-water asceticism of the mind. The uneasy merchants and stock-jobbers took the term to themselves however for self-assurance, and the name stuck, coming to mean not an intellectual quality but a class-conscious membership in the Yankee State Street financial oligarchy.

The Yankees, having been forced into a political retreat with the eventual and inevitable election of an Irish mayor, still kept their grip on the economic structure of the community. They owned the mills, the banks, the real estate, to a considerable extent the stores. With their trusts and brokerage houses they controlled the tight State Street world. Through formal rules of ethics and laws of their own making they prospered, with a deep Protestant conviction of their own integrity. Politics offered the only social mobility for the discontented Irish-Americans. They, the political buccaneers, were the real successors of the post revolutionary merchant-adventurers. These Celtic politicians saw the men who had made the laws as their natural enemies, who had treated their church with aloof insolent contempt. They felt no moral obligation towards any Yankee code of ethics, they rejected the Boston tradition completely. Their own code was what came to be known as "honest graft". It meant a percentage for the City Hall gang on all city building and equipment, favoured contractors who were often near relatives, contributions from all new job-holders. Some of the biggest money came in the construction of highways and in advance information about future real estate developments.

WITH the ebb of its literary movement Boston no longer had any cultural significance. As the Irish consolidated their political control the Yankee ascendancy in

turn withdrew more and more into the assurance of its inherited financial world. The old Bostonians followed a fixed model of what they considered English gentility, English manners and customs, even an English accent. They cultivated a preconceived English way of life, an imaginary solidarity with an aristocratic tradition across the water as their only salvation against the rabble of pressing foreigners, who were legally as much Americans as they were. It was not just an English pattern the old Bostonians were after, they wanted a conscious English background. These newcomers might become American citizens by right after a few years, but they could never be English.

Fear of the foreigner, fear of the future, nurtured the chilly Boston exclusiveness and the naïve legend of a lost England. The Yankee ascendancy copied the English county as best they could in the unpropitious American landscape, rode to hounds across the granite-cropped Massachusetts pastures with flashes of unwonted scarlet, founded schools overnight with suddenly implanted traditions that aped the form and accidental austerities of the English public schools. Episcopalianism became the vogue, and the agnostic descendants of the dissenting Puritans knelt before the successor of Anglican bishops to rejoin the established church that had cropped their ancestors' ears. In Back Bay drawing rooms they looked with envy at the hard arrogant faces in the *Sketch* and the *Tatler*, and they duplicated their habits and amusements. They wore scotch tweeds and bought shooting sticks for gymkhanas, they spent their summers in England every third or fifth year.

FOR two Boston generations the Irish had been the despised foreigners and in the days of their political power they never forgot this. They returned the Brahmin aversion with a spiteful malice that nevertheless masked its own deep sense of inferiority. With time the Irish prospered in other fields besides politics—in building, in advertising, in department and chain stores such as O'Keefe's and Connor's, and in some of the newer industries and public utilities. But they were never and have never yet been able to penetrate into industrial Federal Street or the State Street financial citadel, although some of the Boston banks have been forced to make their deals with Irish mayors. The age-long hostility of the Celt to the English they reapplied to the Yankees. And as the old Bostonians groped nostalgically towards England and English ways the Irish Bostonians by antithesis reacted with a dislike of all things English and a sentimental conception of the Emerald Isle as distorted as the Back Bay view of England.

There is a gross self-flattery to the Celtic mind in the United States, and because of the weight of Irish political influence, especially in the seaboard cities, their assumptions are not openly challenged. Although they do not realize it they have long lost their actual ties with the old country and their conception of Ireland has become a maudlin dream of a green whimsical isle people with leprechauns and little folk, Uncle Tim and his shillelagh, shamrock-bordered roads past low, thatched cottages peopled by winsome colleens or silver-haired Mother Machrees.

Yet the pattern changes. Most of the Irish are still working-class, living in slums like Somerville and East Cambridge, but more and more have moved to such outlying suburbs as West Roxbury and Arlington and Newton that are like the suburbs of any American city from New York to San Franscisco. The very wealthy Irish form a society of their own, mostly centred in the large Colonial-style houses at Chestnut Hill near Jesuit Boston College and the Cardinal's Palace. They still feel a sense of inferiority in regard to the Yankee ascendancy and would like to make themselves acceptable. A few achieve a certain social recognition from the Back Bay. Their names appear in the Social Register and their daughters may be asked to

join the Junior League—but it is no intimate relationship.

During the spectacular campaign of 1922, ex-Mayor Curley defeated the late John R. Murphy because it was whispered round that Murphy was too much of a gentleman. Today many of the middle-class Irish vote Republican. The Irish Democratic vote, however, is still a potent bloc. In the last election the Celtic Democrats took over the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the ancient citadel; but the scene is a shifting one, and there are other combinations, other social and economic factors—and the seeds of disintegration are within them.

CULTURALLY Boston is a curio shop. As a dynamic force it no longer exists, neither among the old Yankees nor the Irish who supplanted them. Politically it is an artificial slum ringed by its suburbs, insolvent, rotted by years of graft and mismanagement. In the hard angularity of its business district it is impersonal as any other metropolis. From across the Charles River in winter weather the morning smoke muffles the outlines of the buildings, and in the black guts of water left in the frozen basin mallards and a few sheldrakes paddle uneasily. The brown fog wisps along the linear structure of the bridges and across the ice. Under that hard dome of steel-blue January sky Boston becomes the Unreal City of the *Waste Land*.

One can perhaps sense the pulse of Boston best on a sultry July night while walking between Scollay Square and the Common. Scollay Square itself is a garish triangle of burlesque houses and honky-tonks with blaring music and harsh neon lights, sailors and their floozies bargaining in doorways, derelict idlers, petty Italian gangsters, the milling aimless evening crowd of a large city.

After one o'clock the footsteps thin, the bars close and the sailors wander back towards the Navy Yard, the stumble-drunks puke into the gutters, then shamble along to the city mission behind the Crawford House. Through the oppressive air the light shines on now empty streets. There are square patches of yellow running along the pavement from Joe & Nemo's where greasy figures are hunched over the hot-dog counter. In the velvet darkness above the roof-tops the invisible nighthawks swoop and cry out mournfully, and there is a sudden sharp whistle of air through their wings as they dart downward.

Along echoing Tremont Street flanked by its vague office buildings the Common lies ahead, a solid irregular heat-stricken shadow beyond Brimstone Corner. The arc lights pattern the varying green of the leaves and near the metal fountain the air is sweaty with the odour of lime blossoms. At the top of Beacon Hill a red intermittent Chevrolet sign is reflected in ruddy overtones by the crude gilding of the State House dome. There are no sounds one can identify under the motionless irregular leaves. But neither is there silence. As a background to the city's quiet, one is aware of a subdued but constant murmur, an elemental vibration that seems to come from every direction and that one suddenly realizes is the hum of the hive, the great enveloping world-city that is both cradle and grave for all its sleeping millions.

£ DEVALUATION:

STEP TOWARDS EQUILIBRIUM or FIRST SHOT IN WORLD TRADE WAR?

By C. H. G. TETHER

SIX weeks have passed since sterling was devalued in terms of the American dollar. During that time, a good deal has been heard about the danger of the success of what Sir Stafford Cripps prefers to call the exchange rate adjustment being imperilled by the inflationary forces it is itself likely to generate. Everybody who knows, or thinks he knows, anything about economics has been busy demonstrating that one effect of devaluation will be to increase the demand for goods from abroad, thereby reducing the proportion of the country's total production available for use at home. It has been explained that a second effect will be to raise the cost of living, since the prices in sterling of the goods we import from the countries of currencies which have not devalued will be higher now that each of our pounds buys less than three dollars instead of rather more than four dollars as it did up to mid-September. The public has been told that if it insists on trying to counter the effect on its personal budgets of the rise in the cost of living by pressing for bigger wages, salaries or profits, we shall have that unfortunate combination of more money and fewer goods to spend it on. Sterling costs of production would then be forced upwards until the prices of our exports when they reached the desired dollar markets would be no more competitive than they were before, despite the ability of the overseas importer to buy the sterling he needs to pay for them on much more favourable terms.

The public has, therefore, been exhorted by the Government to refrain from pressing for the higher incomes it might feel it would like to compensate it for higher living costs. The Government, in its turn, has been exhorted by its critics to reduce the demands made upon the national resources both on account of capital outlays of all kinds and on account of its own current expenditures. It has been argued that a reduction in the proportion of the nation's resources of manpower and materials taken for these purposes would release so much more productive capacity for the satisfaction of the demand for goods for export and home consumption. The prospects of the money-goods gap being closed without the generation of inflationary forces would, in consequence, be much improved, especially as reduced Governmental expenditures would pave the way for tax abatement and thereby provide a stimulus to increased production.

These are obviously matters of great importance, and it is right that they should come in for a good deal of attention. But the pre-occupation of the Government, of Parliament, of the Press and the public during these first post-devaluation weeks with the internal economic repercussions which may or may not be caused by devaluation, and with the internal policy adjustments which may or may not be needed to make devaluation a "success", has one serious danger. It tends to create the impression both in this country and abroad that if these domestic difficulties can be overcome, if the public can be induced to bear its troubles with fortitude and the Government to sacrifice some of its own policies for the national good, the devaluation operation is assured of success.

The acid test of the success of the devaluation operation, however, will be in whether or not it makes a decisive and permanent contribution to the solution of the basic problem of disequilibrium in payment, between the sterling and dollar worlds whether, to put it in another way, it enables the sterling area to increase its dollar receipts and/or reduce its dollar expenditures to such an extent that it becomes possible to end the drain on gold and dollar reserves of the sterling area without making new cuts in imports from hard currency countries. On the assumption that suitable adjustments are made in internal economic policies to combat inflation, is the currency adjustment likely to pass this test? An examination of the prospects in this direction, paying due regard to the train of reactions overseas likely to be set in motion by the sterling devaluation decision, suggests that it would be unwise to expect a great deal of help from devaluation in correcting sterling-dollar disequilibrium.

IT is clear that the British Government's own advisers entertained the gravest doubts as to the value of devaluation as a means of permanently improving the position of the sterling area on gold and dollar account right up to the time of the devaluation of sterling. Nor does the fact that sterling was nevertheless devalued mean that they changed their minds on this matter at the last moment. Indeed, it is evident from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's several statements on the devaluation *volte-face* that in the last resort it was the need to deal with the effects of the widespread *expectation of sterling devaluation* that caused the Government to lower the value of the £. It was not a sudden reversal of the earlier view that, in the longer-term, devaluation was likely to subtract as much and perhaps more from the dollar earnings of the sterling area through reduced yields on goods that would have been sold for hard currencies in any case as it would add to them through the increase in the volume of exports to hard currency markets.

Right through the spring and summer, these expectations of sterling devaluation were giving rise to a widespread tendency in hard currency countries to defer purchases of sterling goods in the hope of obtaining better terms. At the same time the loss of confidence in sterling throughout the world was creating wide discounts on sterling in free markets overseas. And given such facilities it was a simple matter for traders in other countries to side-track the sterling area's legitimate dollar earnings by purchasing sterling area products in "cut-price" sterling for re-sale in dollar markets on terms more favourable to the dollar buyer than could be quoted by sterling area traders arranging business at the official rates of exchange. By the late summer it had become obvious that American and other hard currency buyers would be able to continue their buyers' strike against sterling goods for a longer period than the sterling area could afford to do without their custom. It had become no less clear that there could be no hope of the early revival of confidence in sterling that alone could stop the continued seepage of the area's dollar earnings into the hands of countries trading in unofficial sterling.

WITH the sterling area gold and dollar reserve rapidly nearing exhaustion point, the short-term factors had temporarily become all-important. Something had to be done, and had to be done quickly, to swing them in our favour. The only way this could be done was by removing fears of devaluation, and the only way of removing fears of devaluation in a hurry was by seeing that they were realized, in short by cutting sterling to a point at which it would cease to be "suspect". The fact that in the period since devaluation some of the gold and dollar losses suffered by the sterling area in the six months to mid-September have been recovered, shows that devaluation has swung the balance of the short-term factors in our favour. But it indicates no more than this. It certainly cannot by itself be taken to mean that, once

the forces initially released by the removal of devaluation fears—the rush by traders in hard currency countries to discharge commitments in sterling which had been allowed to accumulate in the pre-devaluation period and the desire of dollar area consumers to raise depleted stocks of sterling area commodities to normal levels—have spent themselves, the sterling area will be closer to equilibrium in its dollar payments and receipts than it was six months ago.

In the longer-term, that is to say in a few months from now, the effect of devaluation on the gold and dollar problem of the sterling area will be determined by its influence upon (*a*) the dollar cost of imports by the United Kingdom from hard currency countries; (*b*) the dollar cost of such imports by other sterling area countries; (*c*) the flow of goods (mostly manufactured goods) from Britain to hard currency markets; and (*d*) the flow of the products of other sterling area countries (mostly raw materials) into such markets.

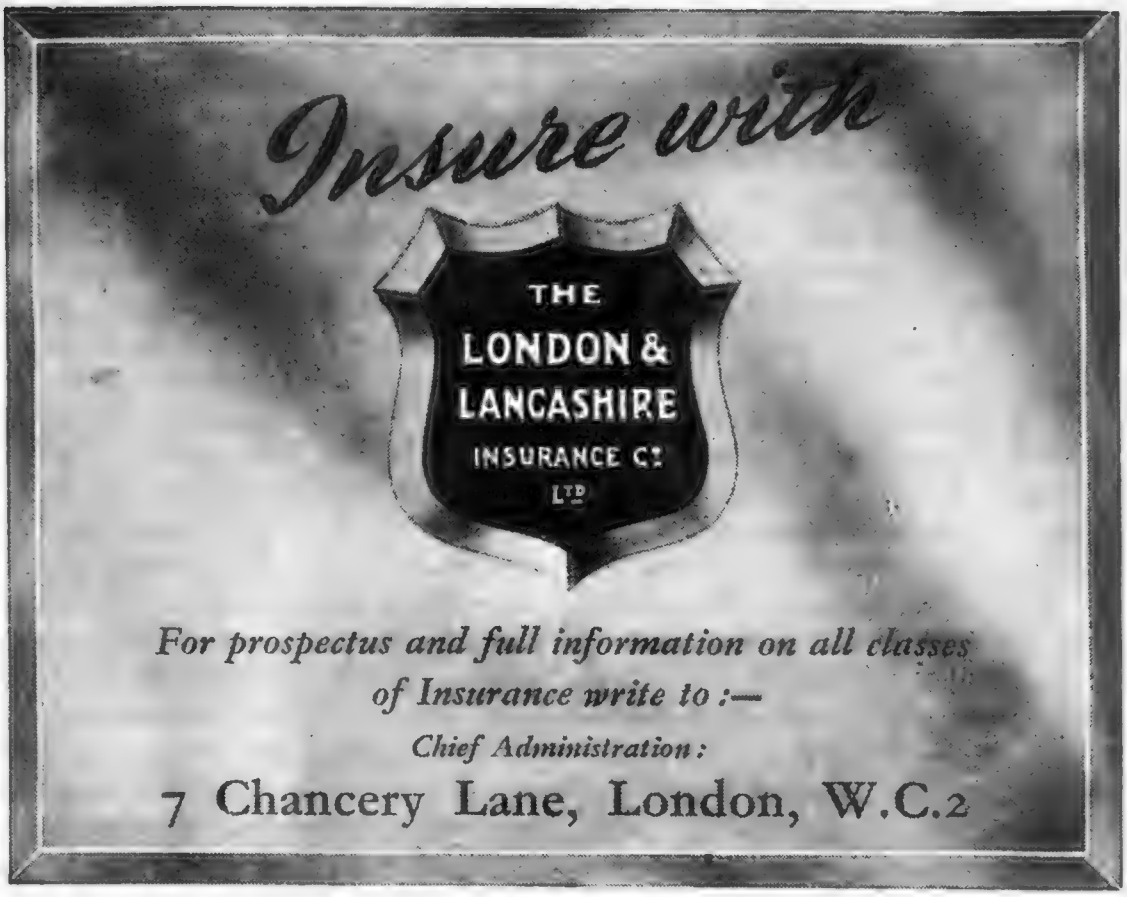
It always seemed highly probable that under at least one of these headings—that relating to the dollar earnings of other sterling area countries—devaluation would leave the sterling area worse off rather than the reverse. For the demand from hard currency countries for the primary products like tin, rubber, cocoa, jute, which are the principal exports of sterling area countries other than the United Kingdom, is determined by the level and trend of industrial production in the dollar countries rather than by the prices quoted for these products. Thus, as the effect of devaluation would be to lower the dollar prices of these commodities without producing any appreciable variation in the volume of buying, it was thought that its net effect might be to produce a contraction in the quantity of hard currencies contributed to the dollar pool by such exports.

In the event, these fears look like being fulfilled. In the month succeeding devaluation, for instance, the dollar yield from the sale of rubber in American markets showed a decline of no less than 13 per cent. And although declines in the dollar prices of other important sterling area commodities have been generally smaller, there seems to be every reason for supposing that, taking this field as a whole, we shall lose more from the lower prices produced by devaluation than we shall gain from the increase in the quantity of business transacted with dollar countries.

IF it is fairly certain that under one of the four headings listed above the sterling area will lose by devaluation, it is hardly less certain that under another it will stand no chance of showing a gain. This is in the matter of imports of dollar goods by the United Kingdom itself. These have already been cut to the bone by the series of import cuts imposed during the past few years, and could be reduced further only at the cost of disrupting the economic machinery of the country and thereby still further endangering its position on dollar account. Since imports from hard currency countries on United Kingdom account are confined to essential goods, the rise in sterling prices caused by devaluation is not likely to act as a deterrent to such purchases.

If, therefore, the devaluation operation is to produce a permanent improvement in the dollar position of the sterling area, it must bring about a substantial contraction in purchases of sterling area goods by sterling countries other than the United Kingdom, which together with the increase in United Kingdom earnings from expanding sale of manufactured goods on hard currency markets will more than cancel out the adverse effect of the drop in earnings from sterling area commodity sales.

At first sight the prospect of important achievements under these headings would seem to be moderately bright. The trouble is that in the process of curtailing dollar spendings by sterling area countries other than Britain and in clearing the way for the capture by this country of dollar markets for



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manufactured goods, devaluation may set in motion forces that will react powerfully to the detriment of the sterling area in other directions. As the quarterly review of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe published in October pointed out, the higher cost of dollar goods in sterling area countries should act as a deterrent to dollar purchases on the scale experienced since the war (in the second quarter of this year, India, Pakistan and South Africa were buying more than three times as much in the United States and Canada as in 1938). But a reduction of dollar imports would mean a corresponding concentration of the demands of the overseas sterling area on the United Kingdom and other industrialized countries which have depreciated their currencies. This intensification of the demand for British goods under present conditions of full employment and an active home demand in Britain would create a serious risk of inflation of export prices, since it could not be assumed that the total volume of British exports would be capable of unlimited expansion. In other words, the savings in dollar expenditures by other sterling area countries might be achieved only at the cost of accentuating the inflationary pressures which have been released at home by devaluation and which will already be tending to cancel out the benefit on the dollar export position the currency adjustment is expected to confer.

ALTHOUGH there has been much talk on both sides of the Atlantic of the prospects of greatly increased sales of British manufactured goods on United States markets now that the £ has been devalued, in practice the main hope of securing large gains in terms of dollars from the devaluation in respect of United Kingdom exports is to be found in the possibilities opened up of the capture of hard currency markets previously held by American and other exporters in Canada, South Africa, Belgium, Switzerland, and elsewhere. The rock on which the plan to exploit devaluation in this way may founder is that of retaliatory action by producers in undevalued countries is likely to lead to pressure for the countries whose markets become endangered.

The extent of sterling devaluation has undoubtedly gravely increased the risks of such developments. It has certainly rendered the chances of obtaining concessions from the United States in the shape of tariff reform much more remote than they would have been had a rate which valued the £ more fairly than 2.80 been chosen. M. Petsche, Finance Minister in the French Government at the time of the devaluation in sterling, put the matter squarely when he described the new level for sterling as "a trade battle rate which compels the economies and international markets of other countries to take defensive measures". A representative of the American shipbuilding industry has already indicated that the industry intends to appeal to Washington for heavier protection against foreign competition, while it is quite certain that other American industries, faced with increased British competition in overseas markets, will shortly be putting pressure on Washington to protect them against British dumping with the aid of "cheap sterling" by a suitable modification in the value of the United States dollar. A number of European countries which had no intention of devaluing their currencies before they knew how low the new £ was to be have already hastened to take "defensive action".

M. Gutt, the managing director of the International Monetary Fund, has described the world currency re-alignment as providing the basis for a return to an expanding level of world trade on a multilateral basis. But it is evident that sterling devaluation could just as easily turn out to be the first shot in a world trade war such as took place in the 'thirties and was not the means of bringing about an expansion in the volume of multilateral trade. If it did—and the Government's deliberate under-valuation of sterling has created a serious risk that it will—the United Kingdom's earnings may well suffer a net contraction.

All in all, therefore, there is no assurance that the sacrifices the British people will be called upon to make as a result of devaluation will be the means of permanently improving the position of the sterling area on gold and dollar account. It has frequently been pointed out during the past few weeks that there is a danger that the temporary relief to the country's external payments afforded by devaluation will lead to the British Government to postpone once again appropriate adjustments in the wrong-headed internal economic policies which were at the root of this year's payments crisis. The same danger certainly exists in the matter of the factors which are at the heart of the disequilibrium in payments between the sterling and dollar areas. Apart from the continuance of inflation in Britain and other sterling area countries at a time when most other countries had entered a deflationary phase, the sterling area's acute dollar difficulties this year can be traced to two main factors. One is the constant upward pressure exerted on the British economy by repayment of debts incurred in the war—the now familiar unrequited exports. The second is the failure of the United States, and to a less extent of the other dollar countries, to pursue policies appropriate to countries enjoying creditor status.

The first of these factors tends to keep the demand for British goods for ever in excess of the supply, thereby applying a constant upward pressure on sterling prices. The second makes the dollar perpetually in short supply, thereby applying a downward pressure on dollar prices. The rectification of the divergence of dollar and sterling prices by resort to devaluation in no way reduces the need to tackle these basic factors—on Britain's part by drastic overhaul of policies relating to the repayment of war-time debts, on the United States' part by lowering of tariffs and other obstacles to imports from non-dollar countries. If devaluation results in the attack on these basic causes of the sterling area's dollar crisis being called off, in the long run it will be found to have done more harm than good.

LETHE

HAPPY the dead who can forget
Life's evils when the sun has set
And darkness follows. Why bewail
Those who wander in their vale?

At the hour of dusk they go
Where the darkened waters flow
Through the fields of asphodel;
Drink their fill at Lethe's well.

Gently thus are lulled again
All their thoughts of ancient pain.
Keep your pity for the living,
Whose memories are unforgiving.

After LORENTSOS MARVILIS.

"TYPICAL DOMINICA"

By ALEC WAUGH

IN the winter and spring of 1928-29, I took a trip through the British and French West Indies. Of the dozen or so islands that I visited, Dominica was the one that I liked the least; at the same time it was the one I was most anxious to revisit; a contradiction that is typical of an island whose saga is one long succession of inconsistencies.

Every fact about it is self-contradictory. The third largest of the British West Indian possessions, it supports one of the smallest populations. Though its soil is extremely fertile, only a small proportion of its surface is under cultivation. Though it possesses in Rupert's Bay a superb natural harbour, its capital stands at Roseau in an open roadstead. One of the loveliest islands in the world, its beauty is a liability, for its mountains by attracting rain have so deluged the interior with floods that no road has been built across the island and no road has been built round the island. Two thirds of the windward coast are cut off from the capital.

FOR many years the island has been in the red. Its ill luck has been persistent and its ill luck has been accompanied by ill management. In the middle of the eighteenth century, it was put up for sale in lots by the British crown. The sale realized over £300,000. Not one penny of this sum was reinvested in the island. It was used instead for Queen Charlotte's dowry. In the 1840's coffee was a highly successful product, but disease destroyed the crops. Limes were planted, and Rose's lime juice became an internationally accepted label. In the 1920's, however, withertip disease damaged, in some cases irremediably, many lime plantations, and the discovery in Italy of a synthetic method of producing citric acid made the marketing of the Dominican product no longer profitable. When the Panama Canal was opened, Dominica by its geographical position should have become the coaling station for British ships, but because owing to the malarial nature of the northern section the capital had been built at Roseau instead of Rupert's Bay, St. Lucia got the contract.

Before World War I a Royal mail steam packet toured the island weekly, collecting cargo and carrying passengers. The service was not resumed after the war, and planters on the windward coast had to rely on schooners and on canoes. For weeks on end the sea would be too rough for schooners to put in to shore.

Work was begun on what was imposingly christened the Imperial Road, a broad surfaced thoroughfare that was planned to link the windward and the leeward coasts. Heavy rains, floods, and mounting costs delayed, curtailed and finally liquidated the enterprise. Then came the hurricanes of 1928 and 1930.

I ARRIVED there shortly after the first hurricane had struck it. I stayed a week. It rained incessantly. Roseau even in the sunlight is a scrubby place. It is clean, but that is about all. It has no harbour; it happens to be the capital only because it is there that the chief valley meets the sea. Seven blocks long and eight blocks wide, it is a cluster of small two-story houses built on stone foundations which have contrived to resist successive hurricanes because, it is claimed, at the time when they were built it was the practice to mix syrup with the mortar. Unpainted wooden balconies project over the sidewalks; there are no gardens, no trees, no flowers.

I made a trip by foot and horse across the island. The mountains were concealed in cloud; incessant rain symbolized adversity. I compared the scenery to a reading of

Endymion. "Like Endymion," I wrote, "it is lush and featureless. Like Endymion it becomes monotonous".

I was there for carnival. There were cocktail parties every night. It was the only time in my life when I have found myself defeated by straightforward run-of-the-mill drinking. Beneath the gaiety I was conscious of an almost desperate defeatism. Dominica was flinging up the sponge: the hurricane was being accepted as the final straw. There was no point in trying any longer.

I was depressed by the all-pervading apathy. Yet in retrospect, in continuing terms of that framework of anomalies and contradictions, out of all the islands I had visited it was of Dominica that I found myself thinking most. I kept feeling that it was my own fault, that it was due to some deficiency in myself that I had got so little there.

I was to hear much of Dominica during the 1930's. In London and New York and on the Riviera, a Dominica legend was taking shape. It was attracting an expatriate colony of intellectuals and eccentrics. It was christened "The Tahiti of the Caribbean". Clearly it had something that the other islands lacked. When I went back to the Caribbean in '48, I was resolved that whatever I was forced to miss, I would not hurry my visit there.

DURING the twenty intervening years, the saga of ill luck had, I was soon to learn, continued. It was typical Dominican luck that during World War II the island through lack of a suitable airbase should have been cut off completely from the war, receiving none of the mental stimulus of being allied with great events. At the same time it suffered definite war damage. Situated between two French islands, it had to accommodate several thousand refuges who, demanding a daily meat meal, created a cattle shortage that still continues.

Ill luck was accompanied by ill management. The blockade of Madagascar created a market for vanilla, but the traders profited so imprudently in this unexpected boom that they shipped inferior and unripened pods, creating a distrust for Dominican produce.

It was then decided that Dominica must be linked by air with the other islands. So an expert on aeronautics was sent to locate an airfield. He selected a strip in the north-east corner. The immediate disadvantages of this site were obvious. Not only was it already occupied with a valuable coconut plantation, but it had no direct communication with the capital. Passengers would have to motor to Portsmouth, then go by launch to Roseau, a journey which would take at least four hours. The expert maintained, however, that no other site was suitable, so the coconut palms were felled, a vast quantity of stones collected, and simultaneously, so that there should be direct access from the airport to the capital, work was resumed on the Imperial Road. For a year the labour and capital of the island were concentrated on these two projects. Then, when the air strip had been cleared and a valuable plantation ruined, a second expert decreed that the site chosen was unsuitable. Simultaneously it was discovered that the sum of money voted for the completion of the Road was quite inadequate, so that to-day for the expenditure of over £125,000 and the slaughter of several thousand palms there is nothing to show except a track of cobbles through the jungle and on the flanks of the mutilated Melville Hall estate, three or four admittedly impressive piles of hand-gathered flints.

"Typical Dominica," was the comment in St. Lucia.

"Typical Dominica," is a comment and a criticism that you will hear often in the other islands.

"Everyone goes crazy there," they say. "All that rain and those mountains shutting them in and everything going wrong. Did you hear about that fellow who tried to dig a hole through the centre of the earth, because his wife was buried in Australia. He dug it with a cutlass, carrying the earth up in a calabash. You can still see the hole. That's typical." Just as it is typical, so they will continue, that the

island should have attracted so many English and American eccentrics, square pegs that after long efforts to fit themselves into round holes have made their homes there.

I SPENT on this second visit a full month in Dominica and a month is ample time in which to examine the resources of an island twenty-seven miles long and thirteen broad. It is not a tourist's island. It has two hotels—the Paz and Cheery Lodge. They are clean and comfortable, but they are located in the very centre of the town. They are hot and noisy. And the first requirements of an hotel in the tropics are a view and a feeling of fresh air. There is no bathing beach. The Aquatic club is housed a mile out of town, in a small bungalow—one of a row—facing a six-yard stretch of pebbles that shelves into the sea. There is a certain amount of undertow so that the scramble up is awkward. Sunbathing on pebbles is not comfortable, nor is there the slightest privacy.

There are few facilities for sport. There is little shooting; the fishing is poor; there is no golf course; the roads are so rough that if you take out a horse, the opportunities even of trotting will be few; any motor trip involves a return by the same route that you took out. Tennis is the only athletic recreation. There is no night life of any kind. Bars close at nine. The adult white community of the island is a hundred strong. It has one mixed club with a tennis court, a bar, a billiards table, and a bridge room. It is here that the social life of the island centres between five and eight, Wednesdays and Saturdays being the big club nights.

On my first visit I had crossed the southern tip, this time I crossed the centre. You have to make such a trip, if you are to understand the island. You have to walk across it and along it. You have to realize just how long it takes to get from one place to another. Your feet need to be sore from walking upon cobbles. Your calves need to ache from climbing slippery paths. You need to have been soaked by rain and chilled by falling temperatures. You have to see how sharply the cliffs rise above the paths, you need to note on this and the other mountain side the brown bare path of a landslide that would have cut away any road that had been attempted there. From a photograph you might be able to realize to what height the mountains rise. You might even recognize the vertical nature of those mountains, of how they stand up before you, like straight and solid walls. But what you would never realize from a photograph is the third dimensional nature of it all. To the right and left and straight ahead you will see what appears at a first glance to be a solid range of mountains; you look more closely and you realize that it is not one range but two, not two but three. You cannot be quite certain whether it is not four or five. It is green, all green. Range after range with its leaf-domed summit merges into the background of successive ranges, with each shade of green merging into another and the passing of the clouds across the sun sending fresh waves of shadow into that seemingly solid background. You may guess how far away a place may be in terms of miles, but you cannot tell how far away it is in terms of time. You cannot tell how many valleys lie between you and it. You need to make such a trip to realize why so little of the interior is under cultivation.

I SPENT a week on the windward coast. It is very desolate, a series of rivers running past ruined factories and crumbling aqueducts, with the cliffs between the valleys rising straight out to the sea, their vegetation crushed and beaten by Atlantic gales, and the shrubs that crown them combed back tightly against the rocks like the crinkled hair of a mulatto girl.

The windward coast never recovered from the hurricanes. One by one the big plantations were abandoned; there is not now a single plantation house between Hatton Garden and Pointe Mulatre. The estates are worked spasmodically by peasant proprietors who "head" their produce across the

mountains, supply local needs or await the caprice of schooners.

Economically the coast lies prostrate; at the same time it is not possible to travel day by day and hour after hour along its valleys without being attracted to its casual friendliness. No one bothers anyone. No one is rich, but they all manage, cultivating their small gardens, working their one man mills. The smallest village has its cricket pitch. There is a garden effect, such as you see rarely on the leeward coast. The villagers are house proud. The further they get from the alien western conditions to which they were transported, the closer do Africans return to the cleanliness and order of the bush.

The police sergeant at Castle Bruce showed me his monthly charge sheet. He had little crime, only one case of manslaughter in three years; the most serious crime was 'praedial larceny,' the robbing of crops and produce, but the chief entry in his ledger was the unusual offence of stupefying fish. The villagers rub bark over the streams, which has the effect of drugging the larger fish and making them easy prey. The shredded bark does not poison the fish; but what merely drugs a big fish kills off the smaller ones and those forms of water life on which the big fish live; if the process were not discouraged the rivers would soon be fishless.

I returned by the Imperial Road. It was all cut out, I had been assured. Much of it was already paved. There were only five miles to be completed.

IT was one of the most strenuous excursions I have ever made. It was raining all the time. I lost count of the rivers that I waded through and slithered over. The footpath is so narrow, so overgrown, and with so deep a drop on the other side that you have to consider each step with the greatest caution or your foot will land on the green roof of a ravine. It is hard to distinguish between a solid root and a broken branch. The planned section of the road is either a greasy surface or a weed-covered accumulation of sharp stones. "The road is sliding," the guide kept saying, and he spoke the truth. Every so often the road had been blocked by landslides.

I am not an engineer. I cannot gauge the amount of skill and labour that would be required for the bridging of those five main ravines and all those minor valleys. I cannot estimate the pressure of the mountain torrents those bridges would have to bear, nor measure the various problems of transport, equipment and accommodation that would be involved, not the cost and difficulty of maintaining a road that would be subjected to an incessant cascade of rain and the consequent inevitable landslides. I am, however, familiar with the inherent laziness and inefficiency of West Indian labour. I know how numerous are the demands now being made in other parts of the British Empire on skilled labour and equipment, how diminished are the resources of English capital and how profitable are the uses to which, in other sections of the Empire, capital and labour can be put. I had heard so much talk about the road. I had heard so many people say, "Of course it will all be all right once the road is finished". But if that road is completed in my lifetime I shall be astonished.

There is nothing to be done about Dominica. That is, I feel, the crux of the whole issue. In every connection there is that constant vicious circle, that cancelling out of contrasting factors. It will never be possible to restore to cultivation the estates on the windward coast unless there is a means of transporting the produce to the leeward coast. Roads have to be built or a coastal service has to be supplied, but the rains will destroy the roads and a coastal service cannot operate until the estates have been restored to their old prosperity. Geologically Dominica presents a problem that no one has yet learned to solve. Its mountains are just that much too high for an island measuring twenty-seven miles by thirteen.

ON my first visit I had been depressed by the defeatism that underlay the gaiety

of carnival. I was not mistaken in recognizing that such an attitude existed, but I had not then seen far enough, I had not then seen how logical was such an attitude nor how inevitable; nor that in the acceptance of it lay the island's charm. I can understand now why it has attracted so many "misfits". "The fatal gift of beauty." What Matthew Arnold said of Oxford in his famous "impossible loyalties" preface to *Essays in Criticism* is apposite to Dominica. In the beauty of her valleys and her mountains, she stands both as a witness and a reproach, testifying in her perfection and defeat, that many of the finest things in life are not for sale, that many of the finest things have no market value, that there are standards other than that of being in the black.

SONG FOR MY THREE BROTHERS

DO you remember the light on the water
At night, and the swans, and the sound of the mill,
And the cold rain falling?

Do you remember the wind in the eyes,
The stones on the hill, and below in the valley
Invisible partridges calling?

Do you remember the castles in Spain
That we span with four hands in the loom of the rain,
The dreams in the room in the inn?

Do you remember the storm in December,
The death and fear at the turn of the year,
Till we saw the shape of Spring,

And found on the tidal shore of time
A face in the sand that seemed to rhyme
With a word we had heard before.

MARY WYKEHAM.

Short Story

THE SILVER CORD

BY GEORGE RODERICK *

"'Tis the place and all around me, as of old the magpies call.
Boding evil to the Lord and flying over Lowesby Hall."

JOHN HANKEY muttered the couplet to himself as, from force of habit, he took off his hat to the bird which flew across the path of the horse he was riding to the meet at Wilmslow Hall.

He recollected that his father had done the same when as a small boy he had ridden with him to the same meet. Fifty years ago.

And round here the country had not changed. The same sodden pastures, the same bridle road, the only difference that the gates were difficult to open. There was a war on, and he supposed that the farmers had not much time to attend to them in this year of grace 1940.

Too old to serve, he had continued to hunt from force of habit and some sort of conviction that the younger man wanted the sport to be kept going.

HE did not get much pleasure from it; on the contrary it tended to bring up the ghosts of the past and they were not all happy ones, nor was the outlook for the future. Rather than face it, he almost persuaded himself that he would prefer to die facing the invader with the pike with which the Home Guard had provided him. The best men had been killed in the first World War, and that went for Bob Acres who had married the only girl he had ever loved and who had died also in the influenza epidemic of 1919, in the hospital where she had been working.

It was on this same bridle track they had ridden back after hunting on a Spring-like February day and she had seemed to want to be with him. He too wanted to be with her, it was on the tip of his tongue to ask her to be with him always, but he had not done so. There was plenty of time he had thought.

During the next week Bob Acres intervened.

His thoughts were interrupted by hoofbeats from behind. Turning in the saddle he recognized a familiar figure. William Greenland had farmed in the country since he could remember, and there were few hunts he could remember in which William had not taken part.

A taciturn individual, he half touched his hat and grumbled that they had better be getting on or they would be late.

THEY arrived as the Master was moving off. A few farmers, about twenty ride astride girls, a couple of old ladies and a Doctor, who had come out of retirement for the War. He knew none of them well except the Doctor, with whom he was certain to have a row before the day was out. Nevertheless for once he was glad to see the red-faced old pig, for he reminded him of the days when he was young and keen and able to ride over a country free of plough and barbed wire. He stopped to remember that there was no reason he should not do the same to-day if the fox ran right. The country was too wet to plough and the farmers for the most part loyal to the tradition of no wire. The hedges had been well kept in the past and they did not need it.

The only difference, lack of enthusiasm and lack of nerve. It had been different when Margaret was there to admire.

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* *Mr. George Roderick is the author of "April Fool," etc., etc.*

The first draw was a gorse near the house. The Master asked him and William Greenland to go on to the corners. They rode together and for once Greenland volunteered a remark.

"Bit different from what it was, Captain!"

"Yes, blast this war, Germans and all to do with them."

"Sounds as if there was one about now."

"There is a training centre near here."

"It's a Jerry," grunted William Greenland. "I always knows the sound of 'em. Damn me, they've found. Stop here, Captain, and I will go to the far corner."

The hounds were whimpering in the covert and the old feeling of excitement gripped John.

If only this bloody aeroplane would shut up; likely to stop any fox breaking covert. Why the Hell couldn't the R.A.F. pilots train elsewhere?

THE whimper of the hounds had become a chorus; from the far corner William Greenland was loosing a view holloa fit to waken the dead, but even the yell of the farmer was drowned by the shriek of the falling bomb.

For a moment there was blackness. It passed in time for him to see the hounds streaming away to his right, though what the Hell was William doing galloping in his direction? Anyhow he was not going to lose his start. He caught his horse by the head, gave him a tap with his heels and was away in the wake of the pack. As he landed over the first fence, he saw the field galloping on his right. Red coats, black coats and habits predominated. Must have been late for the meet, but was it to be the thick overgrown hedge or the stile? His anxiety over he watched the hounds tearing mute over the field in front and pointing for the Grassington woods five miles distant. The fences were easy now, but he remembered that they must be approaching the big brook. Not too big if you caught it right. The hounds were checking momentarily in the field beyond and again he glanced to his right. The brook was widest there and only one was across. It was a lady in a habit. They were running on again; in the distance the dark outline of the Grassington woods, but before they reached that point, the hounds had stopped suddenly and were baying round a drain. "Gone to ground" he supposed, "pity they hadn't run into him but a good hunt. Worth while after all to come out. What fools men were to go fighting when they could have all the excitement they wanted here".

Automatically he got off his horse and led him near to the spot where the hounds were clustered. There was no mistaking that the fox had got in and he wondered vaguely if there was anything he could do about it.

No one here except himself and the woman. Between them, they might get the hounds together and take them near the road, where someone would be sure to come along. He wondered who she was and looked in the direction where he had seen her last.

SHE was coming towards him and something reminded him of Margaret.

"Alone! and suddenly it was as though
The years, the empty years, had never been;
As if, one flashing instant, hearts might know
The thrill of twenty one for seventeen."

He had been reading last night some lines written by Gilbert Frankau long ago, of which he was fond. And now it had come true. It was Margaret and the same Margaret he had last seen twenty-five years ago.

"John?"

"Margaret?"

"Yes, dear."

"Is it really you?"

"Well who else did you think it was?"

"I don't know," he said with a little laugh, "but I thought"—and he broke off suddenly.

"That I was dead," she answered lightly.

Her reply confused him, but she continued.

"Yes it has been a good hunt, just like old

times and only you and I left at the end of it. Isn't it marvellous?"

"Yes, it is," he said, glad that the subject had been turned, "but Margaret tell me about yourself, do you go out often?"

"Not very often, but a lot of us thought to-day that we would like to look at the old haunts again and see some of the old faces. So nice to see you, Mr. Greenland and the old doctor."

"Can't say I should make a long journey to see him."

"How unkind of you, John, especially as I saw him galloping off to render first aid."

"First aid to whom?"

"You, I believe, but I was a beast and didn't stop to enquire."

"Margaret, what do you mean? Is this a joke or have you gone batty?"

"No, my dear, but let me look at you a little closer."

"As close as you like, but no monkey tricks. I still remember you shaking my hand when you had an electric battery in yours."

SHE laughed as she answered. "What an awkward memory you have, but since those days I have been a staid nurse in a hospital and I want to give you an examination."

"What the Hell for?"

"Just to see if you have really come out to join us."

"Come out where, and join whom? For heaven's sake, Margaret, talk sense, I haven't seen you for the devil of a time and all you can say is that you want to give me a medical examination. Let's see, what we can do about these hounds."

"Pretty obvious isn't it we can do nothing, unless we get a terrier to bolt him. Not that I ever liked doing that for sometimes they go down and never come back."

"Best put him on a line like a ferret," John answered gruffly, "I suppose you could pull him back then".

"Yes if the line did not get broken. And that is why I want to look at you, to see if the line has been broken."

"What line? Margaret, I don't know what on earth you are talking about."

SHE regarded him seriously through her beautiful eyes, whilst she said, "John, you used to be fond of quoting the Bible. Do you remember the passage 'Or ever the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken?' "

"I remember it well," said John, "in fact if you want to know I read it as the first lesson in Church last Sunday".

"Did you stop to think what it meant?"

"No, how the devil could I? You can't stop suddenly when reading the Lessons."

"No, perhaps you are right. Consternation in the pews as Mr. Hankey stopped to consider," she answered lightly.

"Well if it comes to that, what does it mean?" he asked.

"It means," she said, "that sometimes the real John leaves the fine figure that encases John and that if the golden bowl be broken, the real John does not return to his casing".

"In other words you mean he would be dead?" he asked quietly.

"If you like to put it that way, but do I look dead?"

"Margaret, darling, no, of course not. You are alive and we are going to be together always."

"John dear, can you bear a shock?"

"Not another electric one," he laughed, but what is it?"

"In your case the silver cord has been loosed but the golden bowl not broken. With the horse it is different; the golden bowl has been broken."

"Then I won't have him any more?" he asked sadly.

"No, dear, not till you come here again, but I will look after him till then. Now you must be going."

"But Margaret, darling. I don't want to leave you. If I do go back, I shall blow my brains out so as to come back to you."

"John dear," she said seriously, "don't say that even as a joke. It is the most terrible offence you can commit and might separate us for ever. When you go back, marry a nice girl and forget all about me. You know it is high time you did and that it is no use living on memories".

"Thank you, I prefer them."

"John, dear, you should not say that, but somehow I cannot help feeling a little pleased. Goodbye, my dearest, and come again one day."

* * *

HE recognized the Doctor's voice talking to someone.

"No need for you, Padre, with your last ministrations, not that they would be any use any road. Most extraordinary case I ever knew. I would have staked my life the fellow was dead, when old Greenland stopped me. Damned good start I had too and they ran him to ground under Grassington, four mile point and not a soul with them. All came to render first aid or out of curiosity. Curiosity? I am damned if any curiosity would have stopped me with hounds running over the Wilmslow Pastures, but professional etiquette has to be obeyed, blast it! Don't suppose we will get a hunt like it again this season, perhaps ever, thanks to our politicians and their generous guarantees. I wish the bomb had fallen—"

"But where did it fall?" asked the milder voice of the Padre.

"It fell within ten yards of our patient, killed the horse and I thought the blast had killed him. And damn it, it had killed him but yet here he is and going to recover."

"Yes," said the mild voice, "it is extraordinary, but I believe there have been cases before. The silver cord loosed, but the golden bowl not broken".

"What the Hell do you mean?" said the Doctor. "Any road I am glad the old fool is still alive. Not the man he was before the Lady Margaret turned him down, but he is a survival from the past; damned few of 'em these days. 'Silver cord loosed' my foot."

"'But the golden bowl not broken,' though my head is, after listening to you," said John in a clear voice as he turned over on the hospital bed and went to sleep.

"LADS AND LASSES"

LADS and lasses, pleasure take,
Day draws on to evening:
Of our days, too, Death doth make
One by one his reckoning.
On with the dance and let it run;
Dark earth shall swallow us each one.

'Neath this earth on which we tread
We shall all lie buried;
'Neath this earth so green with grass
Boys and bullies all must pass;
'Neath this earth with flowers in bloom
Every lad and lass finds room.
Let it feel your spurning beat;
Strike it with your dancing feet.

GREEK: ANONYMOUS.

DOES THE STATE BUILD HOMES?

By RUSSELL KIRK

RIDING on a spring evening toward the old Fife fishing town of St. Monans, brown cliffs on one hand and soft fields on the other, a visitor sees first the curious ancient church with its square Fife tower; then the street of venerable grey stone cottages with their red-tiled roofs; and beyond, enormous dun-coloured stucco barracks jostling heavily in what used to be a meadow. The total stranger to Britain might take these last for badly-designed prisons; but had he been in this country a few days, he would promptly know them to be the new housing scheme of St. Monans. And the new housing scheme of St. Monans is the domestic life of our era writ small.

The State is building blocks of flats amid the fields, building "villas" quickly grimed by factory-smoke. The State thinks in terms of units and floor-space; it seldom troubles about the character of inhabitants. What sort of houses we are making for the people is a point worth graver consideration than it gets; and what sort of people we are making by these houses matters yet more.

"Nothing is more astonishing to an English visitor than the normal American attitude to housing," writes Mr. R. H. S. Crossman, returned from a visit to the United States, in his generally cogent series of articles in *The New Statesman and Nation*. "Here the respect for the rights of private profit-making, the corruption of City and States politics, the power of the lobbyist . . . all combine to produce a deadly and growing blight . . . In Britain we have come to regard housing, like water, gas, electricity and education, as a public service. In America, apart from a tiny number of Federal projects—charity buildings whose inmates must belong to the lowest income groups—public housing and town planning have scarcely begun."

NOW, perhaps nothing is more astonishing to an *American* visitor than the normal British attitude to housing. The American may be quite aware of the anarchy of home-construction in his own country, nearly as dismayed as was Mr. Crossman at American cities with "the blight spreading round their hard sparkling centres"; but he is accustomed, nevertheless, to think of a home as a personal and private domain, reflecting—for all its frequent vulgarity and flimsiness—in some degree the personality of its occupants. Indeed, he thinks of a home as individual property. He may know very well that in America there is a slow drift toward renting and toward flats, away from owning and away from independence; but the aspiration of almost every American family remains the detached and personalized house. He has been taught that this state of mind is an American inheritance from Britain. And then, beholding with his own eyes the terrifying impersonality of current British housing, he is aghast at the modern British break with what he considers one of the dearest traditions of Western civilization. The rootless new town, the sprawling housing-estate, the town-council bungalows in their drab uniformity, the metropolitan blocks in their lowering severity —all make him thank his stars for the unenlightened chaos of American domestic building. And the American working-man might be especially vehement in his protest against the sort of house that British paternalism erects.

After all, more than a little can be said in

defence of American housing of this decade. There has been a considerable improvement in architectural taste. Modest houses usually are categorized by real-estate agents as "contemporary" or "Cape Cod" or "ranch-type", and there is in truth a lamentable tendency toward such standardization of styles; but the lines of these places often are good, their internal arrangements commendable, their location not infrequently attractive. A great many American houses have gone up since the war, despite the tremendous wages demanded by the building-trades unions, and the housing shortage is more the result of a natural itch to spend high pay upon good accommodation than of an actual inferiority of present conditions to pre-war standards. Nor has what British Conservatives call "the concept of a property-owning democracy" been neglected: home-buying has been encouraged by Federal financing, particularly for discharged veterans. If States and municipalities have neglected or refused to undertake programmes of housing-betterment, still private associations have striven: consider Savannah, the handsome old seaport of Georgia, where the Chamber of Commerce has directed the renovation of the charming homes of a decayed quarter, removed the gas-works from their neighbourhood at considerable expense, and generally beautified the city Oglethorpe laid out. When all is considered, "private profit-making" enterprise has satisfied well the American ideal of home-making.

WHATEVER its failings, this system provides the average American with two mighty advantages over British housing: the home-occupant often can choose what sort of house he will live in, and where it shall be. He is convinced there are few freedoms more valuable than these. The engine-driver, if he be frugal and diligent, may very well live next door to the bank-manager. Mr. Aneurin Bevan has remarked with a great deal of sense that it is monstrous to build "class-housing," relegating with civic snobbery all "working people" to monotonous flats or villas in a species of ghetto called the New Town. Now, Mr. Bevan would remedy this segregation by having the State and its agencies the county and town councils build housing for the other ranks of society as well; it does not seem to occur to him that he has multiplied, rather than eradicated, the objections to the State as home-maker. But people of political inclinations very different from Mr. Bevan's ought to join with him in protest against a programme of sharp delineation of class-divisions; what modern society needs is the reconciliation of classes, not their demarcation.

ANOTHER thing modern society needs, whether it is to be a society of collective endeavour or of individual liberties, is the inculcation in the citizen of a sense of social responsibility. Nothing can better attach a man to the preservation of order than the possession of a home; nothing is more calculated to make men what Burke calls "the flies of a summer" than assigning them to mere cubicles constructed out of the charity of the State. In "homes" that are only pens for human units, men neither look backward to their ancestors nor forward to posterity. And a society without reverence for the past nor anticipation for the future presently will cease to be a society at all.

The other day, re-reading *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, I came upon this passage: "Most likely it is foolishness to hope for the revival of any bygone social virtue. The husbandman of the future will be, I dare say, a well-paid mechanic, of the engine-driver species; as he goes about his work he will sing the last refrain of the music-hall, and his oft-recurring holidays will be spent in the nearest great town. For him, I fancy, there will be little attraction in ever such melodious talk about 'common objects of the country'. Flowers, perhaps, at all events those of tilth and pasture, will have been all but improved away. And, as likely as not, the word Home will have only a special significance,

indicating the common abode of retired labourers who are drawing old-age pensions."

So Gissing wrote in 1902. Since then, we have read the prophecies of H. G. Wells and Aldous Huxley *in re* the city of the future, its denizens housed and tended in skyscrapers, the uninhabited countryside abandoned to scientific agriculture—the life of the human ant-hill, or, a simile perhaps more apt, of the human rabbit-hutch, were the crowded creatures are penned, fed, induced to procreate, and, eventually, skinned. To this very literal collectivism our industrial age has been climbing or sliding, with startling rapidity, whether under the label of socialism or of capitalism. One reads of, and sees at the cinema, the projected destruction of an ancient English village, beautiful indeed, because it has a mere one hundred and fifty people and therefore "lacks sufficient communal facilities". The dwellers therein are to be whirled away on the Bagdad carpet of State authority and dropped down into some barracks (with a euphonious and euphemistic title) in the suburbs of a smoky town, where presumably they will be furnished with all the bath-tubs and cinemas a proletarian's heart can desire, at slightly higher rates. They are not consulted on the matter, of course: the decision, in this democratic era (the General Will of Rousseau) is left to boards of health and county councils. Although accelerated under socialism, this process was inaugurated under a regime nominally conservative; and while it is especially pronounced in Britain, it goes on apace throughout the western world.

THIS aspect of our Brave New World compels us to ask ourselves, with as much urgency as some poor Greek queried by the Sphinx, that question so dully laboured by schoolmasters of the progressivist breed: what is a home? And, a question perhaps beyond the ken of progressivist educators, what is the link between home and civilization? Despite our fine talk of better living for the masses, it may be that we are planning for these incoherent beings lumped together under that term a life without point, without principle, which would be "better" only in the sense that an animal in a pen is better off than one in the forest, since he has the assurance of dining everyday—for a while. The home is the chief element in any better life, genuine or alleged. From the hall of Ulysses, built about the tree that formed his bedpost, down to the newest contraption of Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright, the home (let us avoid, for a little, that base coin "housing", with the profile of the jerry-builder stamped upon it) has been not only the criterion, but the essence, of civilization. One need only refer to philology: the word civilized from *civis*, the word urbane from *urbs*. The physical pattern within which men and women live determines the civility, the urbanity of their existence. Are we planning a more civilized, a more urbane, world? Yet in all the bickering between political factions, Labour or Conservative, Democratic or Republican, about public housing—its costs, its administration, its incidentals and particulars—the question of what sort of men and women are to live in these houses, and, indeed, are to have their lives formed by their homes, seems to be ignored. In the long run of political economists and moralists, it matters far more than all the fuss about the municipal authorities of Berlin.

IT was rather encouraging, therefore, when this issue peeped out recently from the pages of an urban periodical, *The New Yorker*. Mr. Lewis Mumford (who holds some very radical ideas about society but who, nevertheless, is not inclined toward throwing out baby with the bath by disregarding individual men) remarked in his occasional page "The Skyline" that the titanic apartment houses so popular with city-planners simply aren't fit for human habitation: thirteenth-floor flats are not the best places in the world to rear children, and these abodes are thrust upon young couples recently married, who either take them or, with earlier Stoics, make the earth their pillow, the sky their coverlet.

These young men and women and their offspring—if they are so sanguine as to bear young in one of these model apartments—are compelled to mould their lives to the streamlined pattern set for them by the governmental functionaries. A streamlined pattern usually is executed in steel, and steel is very cold. This protest of Mumford's roused the patriarchal wrath of Mr. Robert Moses, who has gained a lofty reputation by expending immense quantities of public funds to lay out dull parks and duller highways. Dull, but huge; and the modern reverence for magnitude has canonized Mr. Moses. That prophet came from the Sinai long enough to write an indignant letter to *The New Yorker*, but Mumford was unperturbed. Society on both sides of the Atlantic could use more Mumfords.

For the Robert Moseses of this world, and planners of a lesser sort, are forgetting the home when they build the house. A home ought to have about it these qualities: links tangible and intangible with the traditions of mankind; something of prettiness, perhaps of beauty; a plan or situation that serves to distinguish it from neighbouring homes, to make it a real Englishman's castle; and privacy, a security from neighbour and civil servant and passer-by. Other features are convenient in a house, such as a built-in tub and a big sink and a dumb-waiter and floors of oak; but though it have all these latter comforts, and lack only one of the qualities first listed, it fails to be a home and remains only housing. In northern Michigan are many two-room log cabins with outdoor privies about which the snow lies deep that are literal homes, where owner and guest feel at ease; while in Miami are many luxurious flats that are so many barred cells to tenant and guest. The present decade has been a time of construction on a colossal scale, despite the ravages of war; and the next decade will bring the building of twice as many houses. With real pain we must confess that this immense expenditure has resulted generally in ugliness; and it is yet more painful to realize that we have been building, on a scale seldom equalled in a similar period of history, to suit rabbit character, not human character.

SUCCINCTLY, our housing schemes have been of two kinds, both objectionable:

(1.) The colony of tiny, neat flats at rather high rents, suitable for habitation by china dolls who make no muss and do not reproduce their kind, but thoroughly unsuitable for men and women.

(2.) The monotonous, standardized, jerry-built villa or bungalow or cottage with a silly little plot of lawn about it, *sans* privacy, *sans* individuality, *sans* proportion.

Simultaneously, we have been demolishing an appallingly great number of good old houses, substantially built, well arranged, sometimes historic, simply because they lack flush-toilets: a species of burning down the granary to drive out the rats peculiar to our time. One might be reconciled to this time of laying waste were more handsome or convenient edifices taking the place of those pulled down; but such is not the virtue of our epoch. New construction means lucre for civil servants, contractors, labourers; mere repairing doesn't. Even where demolition has been averted, all too often a fine, roomy old house in which children had a chamber for themselves and a pensive man might escape the family radio in the parlour, have been cut up into little flats, giving to three or four families the floor space properly appertaining to only one.

The repair of derelict structures; the installation of bathrooms at no great expense; the restoration of many an old street or close; the encouragement of residents to retain and improve their old buildings rather than to seek the flashy uniformity of some brick-and-stucco barracks—there exists no insuperable barrier to the achievement of these aims, for if a board of health and a town council can compel a man to quit his house because they don't like his drainpipe, surely they can obtain from the State the authority to fix that drainpipe, rather than let the roof of the

empty house fall in. Yet all the authority vested in these agencies of the State has been exerted in the opposite direction—toward collectivization and standardization, toward destruction of the home and erection of the rabbit-hutch. Some months past, a peer expressed disapproval of walls, hedges, and the like about houses; these reactionary devices squint toward aristocracy, he suggested; for surely, in a democracy, every man wants to stare at his neighbours and have his neighbours stare at him.

AND that leads us to the perplexed question of the relation between democracy and the home. We are all democrats to-day, you know—or else. In a sense, we know very well that Russia is a democracy, and Britain is a democracy, and the United States is a democracy, for they all are instances of the conquest of a society of orders and classes by the levelling impulse. And in each of these instances, the home is in terrible danger. Are democracy and the home inimical? If so, democracy and human survival may be not only imcompatible but incompossible, to resort to a word cherished by Ambrose Bierce. In the first of these democracies, it is permanently impossible for a man to build a home for himself; in the second, it is presently impossible; in the third, it is difficult. The home must be built by the State, which has arrogated to itself most of the wealth and almost all of the control of materials and labour formerly enjoyed by individuals. But can the State build a home? Does the State know what a home is? If it is going to build homes, it will have to alter radically the artistic taste, concept of the good life, and philosophical principles it has displayed hitherto. For at the present writing, the State continues to build glorified rabbit-hutches. It is a moot point whether Men can survive in rabbit-hutches. The State may have to transmute them into rabbits.

Democracy Builds—such is the title of a book by the innovating architect Frank Lloyd Wright. I wonder if it does. Sometimes I think of a sign painted in red upon a board fence surrounding a ruined Victorian house in Chicago: "Democratic Wrecking Company, Incorporated." The author of a more recent work, *American Building*, propounds the thesis that the standard of architectural taste is essentially political: structures which represent the American democratic spirit are handsome, those which signify an outworn creed are hideous. A university class to which I, playing devil's advocate, presented this theory burst into unfeigned mirth; but public authorities apparently take it seriously. One tries to envision the truly beautiful democratic home—flat-roofed (no reactionary Grecian gables), glass-walled (no aristocratic privacy), precisely like its neighbours (doctrine of equal misery). The author of *American Building* thinks a factory is democratic; but I am inclined to consider a factory totalitarian. I hope we aren't both right. Mr. Thomas Jefferson, the democrat *par excellence*, took for his architectural ideal a classical temple at Nîmes, and the Graeco-Roman influence is obvious in Monticello and the Virginia Capitol and his other architectural successes; but then, he never had opportunity to know the charms of the dynamo. Farben alone has looked on beauty bare.

THUS we come back to George Gissing, a man who never really had a home of his own, but knew what one ought to be. "If the noble grow tired of his mansion, and, letting it to some crude owner of millions, go to live in hotels and hired villas; if the cottager sicken of his village roof, and transport himself to the sixth floor of a 'block' in Shoreditch: one sees but too well that the one and the other have lost the old English sense of comfort and, in losing it, have suffered degradation alike as men and as citizens. It is not a question of exchanging one form of comfort for another; the instinct which made an Englishman has in these cases perished. Perhaps it is perishing from among us altogether, killed by new social and political conditions; one who looks at villages of the new type, at the

working-class quarters of towns, at the rising 'flats' among the dwellings of the wealthy, has little choice but to think so. There may soon come a day when, though the word 'comfort' continues to be used in many languages, the thing it signifies will be discoverable nowhere at all."

Prescient? These vaticinations, however ominous, still are subject to our will for fulfilment or repulse. It still is possible for us to choose to live as men, rather than as rabbits. "Why, sir," says the exasperated Dr. Johnson, debating the angelic or diabolical question of free will, fixed fate, foreknowledge absolute, "we *know* the will is free; and there's an end of it".

ONE DAY IN THY SIGHT

ONE morning by the river banks I saw the trees,
Not separate, alone, but all fulfilling in each leaf
Part of one picture, complete filled with all measure of variety,
And alive. So that the river knew her banks and each tree
Upon them. Noting the death of an old oak, and watching
With increasing care the young sapling prominent upon the sward
Which lined her waters, conscious too of the swift shadow
Of the homing hawk, and the dull croke of herons hastening
To fresh waters; while above her sunlit surface the bright
Kingfisher flashed intent upon his prey. And on the far horizon
Lifting their high shoulders to the clouds lay the great hills,
And all between them and the moving river life was there;
Life piled on life; each bird intent upon its task, each flower
Building its own beauty to the sun, and all was boundless energy.
No profit motive moved the violet, and the tireless ants
Recked little of the idle hour limiting the energy of life
But all with one accord mindful each of its own task, sought
To fulfil its destiny. The slow moving pike in the deep depth
Of darkened pools, the surface loving minnow, the rat upon
The wet bank, the mighty cattle on the green meadow,
The squirrel on the trunks of forest trees, the thrush musical
Upon the topmost branch of lofty elm or ash, the darting swallow
Cleaving the still air, and high above all in the bright blue
Of heaven the poised lark marking with his song the joy
That dwelt in all. These all gave glory to the gift of life.

And so the shadows came, and the long evening
Set its seal upon the appointed day, and one more shift
In God's great factory of earth drew to its close; no waste was here
Or lack of joy, but each life form in every movement gave
Joy to itself, to its creator, and to the humble watcher on the bank,
Who in peace moved thankfully away.

MORLEY HEADLAM WELLS.

LETTER TO A MEMBER FOR OXFORD UNIVERSITY—No. VI.

SIR, *Moriturum te saluto*—I salute you as the hour of your Parliamentary death approaches; and, if any words of mine could afford you the least consolation, I should wish to tender them. You, august in your academic credentials as an eagle, are as one falling victim to a sparrow, or, if you prefer, to many sparrows, armed with their petty bows and arrows; and your dismissal from Parliament is significant of the topsy-turvydom of times when education, like virtue, is in theory loudly praised and in practice expelled from our counsels. I could weep over your fate; and not over yours alone. Catullus-like, I could mourn for the sparrow that has shot you down—and for all the other sparrows that hop twittering around him. For he, too, was of our University; and this matricide of his Alma Mater must engrave itself ingloriously enough upon any memorial of him.

Alas, poor Clement! Carlyle would have rhapsodized over thy conduct, declaring thy boots to be too big for thee, telling thee that thou hast not stature to perceive that Humanism is the only hope of humanity—and so on and so forth. Johnson would have bludgeoned thee with much ruthless repartee. Burke would have blasted thee with the breath of a philosophy soaring high above the heads of thy Webbs and thy Wellses. And Adam Smith would have argued with thee until thou wast no longer sure whether thy distinction between the wealth and the welfare of nations was more than a convenient casuistical conceit. And Shakespeare!—Shakespeare, maybe, would have smiled at thy simplicity and bid thee take warning by the fate of Cade and his "rabblement", who had tried thy party pranks long since and with deplorable results. Alas, poor Clement! Is there then no eminent Englishman at all to defend thee and all the hosts of Sparrowdom that flutter and fall around thee, like autumn leaves in far-famed Vallombrosa? "Ruskin," sayest thou? "Is it Ruskin that is thy master, philosopher and friend?" Let us see then how that is. Let us look at that book which among all his works Ruskin declared to contain "the truest, rightest-worded and most serviceable things" he had ever written! Let us look at "Unto This Last", and see whether thou hast read it with understanding. This is what I find there; and I challenge all Sparrowdom to dispose of it, and the truth of it, if they can.

> "Observe," says the author (on page 159 of that classic treatise), "in these statements I am not taking up nor countenancing one whit, the common socialist idea of division of property: division of property is its destruction; and with it the destruction of all hope, all industry, and all justice; it is simply chaos—a chaos toward which the believers in modern political economy are fast tending, and from which I am trying to save them. The rich man does not keep back meat from the poor by retaining his riches; but by basely using them. Riches are a form of strength; and a strong man does not injure others by keeping his strength, but by using it injuriously. The socialist, seeing a strong man oppress a weak one, cries out—'Break the strong man's arms'; but I say, 'Teach him to use them to better purpose'. The fortitude and intelligence which acquire riches are intended, by the giver of both, not to scatter, not to give away, but to employ those riches in the service of mankind; in other words in the redemption of the erring and aid of the weak—that is to say, there is first to be the work to gain money; then the Sabbath of use for it—the Sabbath whose law is, not to lose life, but to save. It is continually the fault or the folly of the poor that they are poor, as it is usually a child's fault if it falls into a pond and a cripple's weakness that it slips at a crossing; nevertheless most passers-by would pull the child out, or help up the cripple. Put it at the worst, that all the poor of the world are but disobedient children, or careless cripples, and that all rich people are wise and strong, and you will see at once that neither is the socialist right in desiring to make everybody poor, powerless, and foolish as he is himself, nor the rich man right in leaving the children in the mire."

Alas! poor Clement, thou hast not then read thy Ruskin aright. There is nothing here of that snarling malice which too many "progressive" politicians from 1909 to 1949 have made so much use of to catch votes with, but rather a much misunderstood effort to

recover that "logical definition of WEALTH" which a man needs to keep ever before his mind if economic science is to work smoothly! And what exactly may that definition be? Listen again, then to the prophet:—

> " . . . That man is richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence, both personal and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others."
>
> Add to that, this:—". . . if there be any one point insisted on throughout my works more frequently than another, that one point is the impossibility of Equality."

Alas for Sparrowdom! Not much is left after that of all its peckings and twitterings! But no doubt like many true things the truth of the matter had all been said and better said before, in the Christian Gospels, and preached from Christian pulpits, and, of course, left unperformed by many so-called Christian men; which last fact is still at the root of all these troubles of ours, national and international.

To read Ruskin is to rise with an enhanced sense of personal responsibility and human dignity, to increase one's pity for mankind, one's terror of demagogy, one's certitude that the Christian Gospel is the only key that can unlock the human enigma; whilst to read socialistic manuals is too often to remind oneself of the terrible sentence with which Wells pointed his portrait of the Egeria of the socialist movement—Mrs. Sidney Webb, hardly at all disguised as "Altiora Bailey":—"Her soul was bony, and at the base of her was a vanity gaunt and greedy."

Do you think it possible, Sir, that some Gibbon sitting at some distant date among the remains of an Oxford that had been destroyed by bombs or depopulated by atomic energy, and inspired to reflection by socialists sweetly singing "The Red Flag" among the ruins of Ruskin Hall, might conceivably inaugurate a history of our times with some such prefatory words as these that follow?—

It has been asked by an Oxonian, very famous both as a philosopher and a prelate, why, since "things and actions are what they are and the consequences of them will be what they will be", we should desire to be deceived about them. Such fearless realism, whilst its high rationality and moral integrity rendered it acceptable to the Age of Reason, made but little appeal to the Britons of the twentieth century and was especially offensive to their politicians, who, for sufficiently obvious reasons in a democratic period, had ruined their faculty of judgment by abandoning the theological virtue of hope in favour of the vote-catching habit of optimism. "Cheerio!" was a familiar, if fatuous expression which, with no little felicity, discovered the plight of a people who had seen better days and known wiser counsels.

The chronicles of mankind leave us little excuse for believing that any human Power, no matter how imposing at the height of its development, will not ultimately lapse into a decline portending decay. Yet the British Empire by reason of the range of its enterprise, the extent of its resources, the freedom of its institutions and the ability of its rulers had rendered it pardonable to suppose that it might constitute an exception to the general rule and escape the slow erosion of destiny, such as is perceived in the external fate of Spain, of whose vast colonial empire nothing is now left, and in the interior doom of France, condemned to search in vain, ever since her famous Revolution, for a constitution to suit her people. Indeed, had Britain continued content in the twentieth century to pursue the policy both at home and abroad which her traditions provided, it is by no means impossible that she might have long defied the laws of chance and change. A foreign policy free from commitments and summarized in the words 'isolation' or 'independence', enabled her, with the mastery of sea-power firmly in her hands, to use her strength at any particular moment as her best interests dictated and as the preservation of peace required. Her domestic policy was no less well calculated to encourage a high development of national wealth and individual self-reliance: and, if the unhappy and the unfortunate still stood in need of all the assistance and attention that compassion could

inspire and sagacity approve, it would be impossible for anyone acquainted with the statistics and considerations adduced by Giffen, the great statistician of the late Nineteenth Century, to deny that social conditions had undergone during the reign of Victoria a vast and striking amelioration and justified a belief in the fundamental soundness of the economy then in vogue. The statesmen of that period had assimilated the famous advice of Voltaire and had been content to cultivate their garden, and with excellent results. They had conceived themselves to be trustees of British interests, and, where those interests were not concerned, they were satisfied to leave the destinies of mankind in the hands of a Supreme Being, of Whose existence they entertained no serious doubt, and upon Whose plans for the redemption of Humanity they did not suppose themselves to be capable of improving. "Every nation for itself, and God for us all" epitomized the policy of Canning, who was accounted by the eminent Acton to have been as great a foreign secretary as Britain gave birth to; and the self-reliance thus postulated in international affairs was equally presumed in individual ones. Justice was conceived as a harmony and not an equality of interests.

With the advent of the Twentieth Century Prudence, so long esteemed a cardinal virtue, fell out of fashion in the conduct of public affairs both abroad and at home, and was in course of time replaced everywhere by an Idealism without stint or limit—an idealism which prided itself upon living dangerously and promising what it could not perform. Britannia exposed her Fleet upon a sea of troubles, and at the end of near half a century of Continental adventure and commitments lost for ever her traditional mastery of the Ocean. The successive hostilities in which her politicians persuaded her to engage, had the further effect of knocking out Austria for good as a Great Power in the First World War, and Germany for an indefinite time in the second. Palmerston, by far the most bellicose of her Nineteenth Century Foreign Secretaries, had had the wits to see and to say that, if Austria had not existed, she would have had to be created; and no Minister of even modest intelligence should have supposed that, by eliminating the two Central Powers on the Continent, the problems of Christendom would be elucidated. With the Habsburg Empire gone and the German Empire split into two sections, the way was open for Russia to make herself master of Prague; and, according to the Bismarckian formula, he who is master of Prague is master of Europe.

Though there is nothing in this sequence of events to astonish a good student of history, it was calculated to surprise the members of the Labour Party who had put all their money on the Bolshevik horse and dubbed its rider, as a mark of confidence, with the affectionate sobriquet of "Uncle Joe". The critic should not, however, permit himself to smile at such artless simplicity. The eminent philosophers of the Labour Movement—the over-confident Webbs—had taught all idealists to see in Soviet Communism the prospect and promise, if not the finished model, of a new civilization; Keir Hardie had affirmed that communism was "the final goal of socialism", and the inconsiderable Attlee had proclaimed as late as 1947 that, in respect of economic planning, the Union of Soviet Republics represented the ideals of his associates. To suppose that the economics of a police-state could be successfully grafted upon a country rooted and grounded in free institutions, betrayed in the speaker a lack of political judgment as great as his earlier conviction that a strong foreign policy could be pursued simultaneously with a reduction or neglect of armaments. But, if the ineptitude of Labour Party leaders creates surprise, how much more must the fact that politicians of the standing of Eden and Halifax should have entertained expectations of Russia as a potential ally not so very dissimilar to those which bemused and beguiled the mind of the much mistaken Bevin. Surprise may, however, be a little modified by the reflection that idealism and

optimism were by far the most potent influences in that particular period, and that politicians, solicitous to secure the votes of a democracy, sunk in sentiment and contemptuous of wisdom, must needs lend a ready ear to doctrines acceptable on the platform. He was a great realist who commended the example of a king sitting down on the eve of hostilities and considering whether with the ten thousand men at his command he could successfully encounter another monarch advancing upon him with twenty thousand. He would have been a great realist who in 1939 had pointed to the Ukraine and said, "We must stop Hitler there; for not until the Drang nach Osten reaches it, can we hope to have Russia on our side". But an idealist considers no such things, will give the world for an idea, and follows the lead of the chivalrous Don Quixote to the neglect of the horse-sense of the unromantic Sancho Panza. Britons, with few exceptions, were idealists in 1939; and the warning words of Lloyd George in the House of Commons and of Beaverbrook in his Press passed as little noticed as did the resignations of John Morley and John Burns in 1914. The Idealists pretended that it needed no more than a new defeat of the Germans to inaugurate a golden age of international harmony and perpetual peace; and the politicians, whatever doubts some few may have entertained regarding this happy consummation, persuaded the people that Britain herself would be in the gravest peril unless, all unprepared, she engaged in a life and death struggle for the defence of the Polish corridor.

The age of miracles was already alleged to have gone by; yet a commentator might be excused for declaring that Britain in 1940 was saved by a miracle, and for adding that a second miracle was worked when Hitler obligingly attacked the Russians and the Japanese attacked the Americans, thus bringing the two greatest Powers of the world to the aid of the brave, if temerarious Britons. We should not, however, allow ourselves to suppose that the rescue of Britain or the annihilation of Germany produced any of those effects that the idealists had foreseen. The death of Hitler, the triumphal march through Berlin, the trial and execution of the Nazi leaders at Nuremberg, and the sweet influence of terror, destruction and defeat, all alike, contrary to the expectation of the idealists, left the heart of man completely unchanged; and, within a very little while, the Power they had hailed as the genius of a new civilization was pursuing a policy indistinguishable from Hitler's, though on a larger scale and with some increase of dexterity. The Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World, the disarmament of nations, the inauguration of universal peace—of these things the idealists, perhaps, continued to sing in their hearts but spoke of no more with their tongues. Never, indeed, had the friends of humanity stultified themselves so completely. The finest hour of the Airmen was also the feeblest hour of the foreign ministers, in respect of whose work one might perhaps affirm that never had so many owed so much suffering to so few.

Happily for themselves, if not for their fellow-creatures, Idealists are full of resource. The international sort had hardly been confounded by the event before a body of national idealists was to be seen advancing to the charge. The desperate remedies to which Britain had been compelled to resort to save herself in her hour of distress had resulted in giving to a Parliament, already five years old —to borrow Churchill's contemporary words —"practically unlimited power over the life, liberty and property of all His Majesty's subjects". Such large authority which would at any other time have been the object of a fierce resistance, played straight into the hands of the idealistic planners, who found a nation accustomed to servitude and were the more easily able to keep it in bondage. Conscription, of which the world knew nothing, or next to nothing, until the first French Revolution introduced it in the hope of imposing its own ideology upon all its neighbours, was now prolonged in England into

peace-time by a Labour Government whose nobler traditions and earlier leaders had viewed the system with horror and fear. Confiscation followed in its company. If it was fair to commandeer the lives and services of men, was it not fair also to commandeer their property? The argument was plausible; and it needed only a little unction to give it the sweet smell of virtue. Attlee, whom a contemporary epigram, attributed to a high authority, described as "a modest little man with much reason for his modesty", gave his blessing to a redistribution of wealth which found no parallel in the modest depredations of Empson and Dudley and must rather be compared to the great Henrician seizure of Church property. Benefits, if we refrain from calling them bribes, though of what ultimate value only time could show, were showered lavishly in every direction; and among them were to be found innumerable pairs of spectacles. Our authorities do not actually affirm that these had rose-coloured lenses; but it may be assumed that the Minister of Health did not neglect so elementary a precaution.

The more fortunate classes, by whose industry or abstinence from spending, these vicarious benefactions were initially, if not permanently, rendered possible, showed a good deal of dignity, leaving without murmur houses which in no few cases spoke far more eloquently of some inward courtesy and hospitality of the soul in the owners than of vulgar display or wasted wealth. The expropriators did not behave with any comparable grace; and their speeches betray indications of a gloating malice quite irreconcilable with the charity and compassion which were supposed to be urging them on to noble deeds. Nor, if we look closer, shall we perceive very much to admire in these new friends of humanity. An earlier House of Commons was described by a famous critic as consisting of hard-faced men who looked as if they had done well out of the war. The House of Commons, where the now forgotten Attlee pulled the labouring oar, might with equal propriety have been described as containing soft-brained men who hoped to do well out of the peace. They had been notably quick to raise their own salaries, and to raise them higher than any change in the value of money could explain: whilst the Prime Minister himself, to whom the nation might naturally have looked for a lead in self-sacrifice, consented, without a sigh or a resistance, to become the most privileged person in the country and to allow the first £4,000 of his income to come to him tax-free. It is further to be observed that the leading members of the Government were evidently paid rather on the basis of their needs than their abilities. We must not, of course, hastily assume that all the strong words used by their opponents about them were better justified than those they used about their opponents; but, if we judge them by such standards as they themselves invited, we cannot greatly err. The Foreign Secretary, the burly Bevin, added something to the gaiety of nations by his conspicuous inability to get on with Molotov in whose political principles he had too prematurely professed to discern a community of thought that was to make their labours kin. Even more rashly had he boasted that he could settle the Zionist problem and had gone so far as to stake his reputation on doing so; only, however, to see it settled in the event by the Jews. But the cases of Shinwell and Dalton, Ministers respectively of Fuel and Finance, deserve to excite ridicule tempered by patriotic resentment. They had represented that the crises in their respective departments, foreseen and foretold by wiser men, were figments of malicious fancy; but the crises came. Shinwell was retired, protesting, to the War Office; whilst Dalton tumbled down, tripped up by a blazing indiscretion, and "Daltons" (as his two and a half per cent Government Stock was named) came tumbling after. Three able lawyers served to relieve the monotonous mediocrity of the Administration, though their proceedings hardly justify us in supposing that they thought all was right with its personnel. In general, indeed, they

defended its shortcomings with the practised arts of the advocate; yet an occasion is not wanting to show that they thought it advisable to keep a sharp eye on their colleagues and even to put them to the question in Court. A special tribunal was constituted to investigate charges of alleged corruption; nor did the Ministry emerge from the ordeal with a record that was beyond reproach or without associations that did not invite surprise. Public spirit, or at least professional cohesion, led the politicians to say little of a matter that might have provoked comparison with more notorious affairs in countries such as France and America, where the march of democracy had been less retarded by the presence in public life of artistocratic traditions and where it was only too common to hear the representatives of the people spoken of with the minimum of respect and the maximum of suspicion. Yet the chronicler may be permitted to observe that the company which the New Model Ministry was shown to have kept was not altogether worthy of the New Dispensation it had engaged itself to introduce; and we must suppose that the maxim that a man can be known from his friends was no longer deemed applicable in a world socially socialized.

The particular achievements of the Administration, though the eyes of the Prime Minister appeared to fill with admiration whenever he referred to them, do little to encourage the commendation of the historian. The nationalization of the mines and railways produced neither the industrial zeal nor the reduced cost that had been expected by the idealists who advocated them. Strikes and procrastinations manifested the displeasure and disillusionment of Labour; whilst at the Docks, where the Administration especially congratulated itself on the abolition of casual labour, an unofficial cessation from work, colossal in extent but based upon remote and vicarious grievances, threatened the economic life of the country and compelled the Ministry to call on the armed forces to take the place of the disgruntled dockers. Ministers did their best to make out that this national disaster was the work of communist agents, whose untenable and mischievous arguments the dockers had not the intelligence to reject, but it is probable they rated the understanding of their supporters too low and their own understanding of the situation too high. The Chairman of the National Dock Board declared that the Government were "crazy"; and he was of their political persuasion and in a good position to form a judgment.

The philosophic historian, as, free himself from all the agony of that distressful age, he dissects the "bony soul" and the "vanity gaunt and greedy" of the Socialist Idealism of the time, may be tempted to reflect that the total failure "to make good" of totalitarian Russia, to which national and international idealists alike had looked as to their glass of fashion and their mould of form, should have convinced all but the most obstinate that they lacked political insight. Unfortunately, however, a crowd of imperturbable cranks and enthusiasts darkened the dry light of experience; and the votaries, or victims, of bureaucratic planning, whether they were compelled to waste their energies at home on the filling up of countless, superfluous forms, or to earn in the metropolis a precarious livelihood by elaborating innumerable regulations to the confusion of their fellow citizens awaited the decline of their country in defiant despair. Idealism, as the nation was gradually compelled to admit, had seduced it into fighting two wars without attaining either peace or security, and into embracing a system of economics which had had no success and had afforded no satisfaction. A true society must be rooted in a realism corresponding with the nature of things; and no intelligent man, acquainted with the history of Europe, could be excused for not perceiving that the genius of Christian Humanism had until lately supplied the enduring energy and mellow wisdom of a favoured Continent. The Platonic Socrates, when he defined Justice as "a minding of one own's business", showed a far deeper understanding of human con-

ditions than the Idealists or Idealogues, who sought to treat it as synonymous with equality, the most equivocal term in the world and the best calculated to promote a dullness beyond description. All the clerks of the world, with innumerable pens and untold reams of paper at their command, could never redistribute wealth in equal portions so fast as children come into the world or as the aged make their exit from it. But Justice, conceived as the outcome of a social harmony, through which, though no equality of possessions can exist, the great music of Christianity moves, is conceivable enough and in a bout of logic will throw the Socialist or Communist champion at every encounter.

Faulty as in many respects the execution of its precepts has been, the system of society which rests on the basis of faith, hope and charity, has inestimable advantage over one raised on the obvious contradiction between Liberty and Equality, glossed over by a sanguine, but usually in the result sanguinary, idea of Fraternity. In the design of the Revolution Idealism ran mad; but in the real architecture of Christendom the implications of an association, really and truly humane, were provided for in a manner demanding only in every man a surrender to the Grace of God, for which no coercive or mechanical action on the part of the State can ever prove a substitute. Great things might have been done in Britain if Lloyd George in his time had boldly declared that the compassionate treatment of poverty and distress was a thing of too noble and delicate a nature to be made the sport of political parties. He chose otherwise; and the Labour Party which in this matter, as a community of counsel during the Second World War showed, was not in truth greatly divided from its opponents, followed in his footsteps, repeating and strengthening his unlovely slogans. Perhaps it could do no otherwise; for one or more of its leaders had made it all too plain that the lust of power, rather than the grace of compassion, dominated their desires and would not be denied.

Towards the close of the Attlee Administration a newspaper* reported the sale of Bernard Shaw's copy of Dante's Works. Inside it the old Fabian had written:—"My grudge against Dante is that he established the cant about the Redemption of Love which is my *bête noir(e)*." Shaw, had he been a man of deeper insight, would have reflected that a *bête noire*, however bad it may be, is better than a *bêtise rouge*, which was the demonstrated consummation of the new civilization of Russia.

Such things, perhaps, some future historian will say.

Sir, I bid you farewell—a last farewell. The representation of the Universities in Parliament has been ignobly terminated by a party feigning all the while to reverence education. But for my part I do not doubt that the legend of Oxford and the motto of New College will yet haunt the precincts of Westminster, if only as a reproachful ghostly writing on the wall:—"*Dominus illuminatio mea*"; "*Manners maketh Man*".

ALGERNON CECIL.

* *Daily Telegraph* 11th July, 1949.

Theatre

AUTUMN STREAM IN FLOOD?

By HUBERT GRIFFITH

SUMMER DAY'S DREAM. By J. B. Priestley. *St. Martin's.*

TREASURE HUNT. By M. J. Farrell and John Perry. *Apollo.*

THE SEAGULL. By Chechov. *Lyric, Hammersmith.*

BUOYANT BILLIONS. By Bernard Shaw. *Prince's.*

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST. By Shakespeare. *New (Old Vic. Co.).*

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE. By Tennessee Williams. *Aldwych.*

TIMES are not as they were in the old, gentlemanly days of the Victorian and Edwardian theatre forty or fifty years ago, when there was a general "summer recess"—when even reigning London successes took a *relâche* from July to the Autumn, their star actors and actresses going off on gentlemanly or ladylike holidays to Deauville, while the lesser members of the company either put in a few weeks at seaside theatres, or merely sat about thanking their stars, in both senses, that they had an assured job to go back to in October. New productions in London in mid-August would have been unthinkable.

Nowadays, in the present jungle of the London stage, no established success would dream of interrupting its London career merely "seasonably", knowing that in the general dearth of theatres, its theatre would be grabbed by another company, and fresh scenery be shifted in, within a hour of its last curtain-fall. Nor is there any financial reason for them temporarily to close. Such a success as "*Daphne Laureola*" has been playing to almost unfailingly full houses for the whole summer, to such an extent that when there were half a dozen seats vacant at a recent matinee, on one of the hottest days of the year, the company was shocked. Nor is there usually any rigidly observed close season in the summer for the production of important new plays. It is largely fortuitous that the recent appearance of four first-ranking plays, Shaw's "*Buoyant Billions*", Chechov's "*The Seagull*", "*A Streetcar Named Desire*", hailed in America as a sensation, and the Old Vic production of the lovely but rarely acted "*Love's Labour's Lost*", should have taken place within a few nights of one another, and given the impression that the "Autumn Season" as in the old days should have started. The London theatre of to-day is far too much a matter of cut-throat competition, among its own members and with the cinema collectively, to have any time for such nice distinctions. It has to work twelve months a year for its keep.

TO cast back, before coming to this new batch, to a couple of plays that appeared in the high summer, one of which I regret to say has already been withdrawn. This is Mr. J. B. Priestley's "*Summer Day's Dream*" which ran only a few weeks at the St. Martin's. Which was a pity. The play had many high qualities of thought and argument and passion. It is assumed that in two or three decades from now, England will have had another major war, will have been reduced to a third-rate power, and will, as exemplified in a south-country farm where the play takes place, have been reduced to weaving its own woollens, abolishing the wireless, hand-turning its own songs, dances and dramatic festivals, and using a few windmills or

water-mills for its modest electricity supply. Nothing inherently impossible in this. Much that is interesting. Priestley has been a lifelong advocate of the thesis that man's melody comes from within himself, and that the mass-addictions to the modern radio and cinema have gone a long way to tone-deafening us and eye-blinding us.

Enter to this agricultural community three delegates from the industrial and imperialist powers of the future, India, U.S.A., and U.S.S.R. They offer to buy up this remaining patch of England. The remaining patch of England says that it is quite happy, thank you, and turns down the offer.

Now here at least is something worth talking about, a genuine theme. The weakness of the Priestley play, that has many great points of strength, is that the delegates from the industrial countries are made out to be merely stooges, without a single talking-point in their favour. As it is a play of argument, the argument should at least have been balanced. In England, even if hundreds of thousands have been rendered tone-deaf by listening to American crooners, many tens of thousands have been attracted to listening to classical music. In industrialized America and its Universities, there are more students trying "to do the thing (construct or act a piece of drama) for themselves" than ever before. And in industrialized Russia—one of the few points on which even its enemies would not disagree with its advocates, local talent in music, dancing, poetry, drama, is encouraged almost to the point of mania.

A discussion on an even broader theme, of how mechanization of industry need not (or can be made not to) destroy the basic artistic urges by which men live, might have provoked a play one degree better than Mr. Priestley's. But it was obvious that his deep feeling on the matter had to have an outlet. I was sorry that the London public could not take it.

THE other play, that is still happily with us, is a semi-lunatic Irish farce, "*Treasure Trove*". It is written by the two brilliant collaborators of "*Spring Meeting*", the witty Irish lady who writes under the name of "M. J. Farrell", and Mr. John Perry. Both of them do really know, with intimate love and knowledge, their Irish country-house life. The ageing aunt who dominates the scene is mildly batty. She believes that she is perpetually travelling round the world, though she never actually moves further than her own drawing-room. Any form of lunacy as a theme for fun is normally offensive, but in this case the delusion is so mild, and gives such happiness to all concerned—and the old lady turns out in the end to be so far the shrewdest of the family—that I wholeheartedly enjoyed it. It hangs on a *bravura* part for Dame Sybil Thorndike—but who minds a *bravure* part, provided that it is played with exquisite art? In this play Dame Sybil seems to be taking just the same sort of gay and excited holiday—almost night-out, one should say—from heavy classical parts as does Dame Edith in "*Daphne Laureola*". Go to them both—and compare them—and, above all, enjoy them.

MR. SHAW'S "play of his dotage" (in his own words), "*Buoyant Billions*", which I reviewed here when it was done at Malvern a little time ago, now again appears as not in the least a play of anyone's dotage. It is short and slight, it plays for just less than two hours. But it contains a corruscation of verbal fireworks such as any younger man would have been glad to send up. And it has tenderness and wit and gaiety in it. It plays even better at its second hearing than it did at its first. Go and see it, or you will miss, as they say, "something".

SHAKESPEARE'S "*Love's Labour's Lost*", done by the Old Vic Company at the New Theatre, remains a problem play. Being no Shakespearean scholar I do not propose to solve it, but only to cast some stones into the tranquil pool. It is commonly adjudged to be one of Shakespeare's very earliest plays, by

the scholars who go by dates of publication, "metrical tests", and so forth. Most of it is in rhymed verse, not in the later blank verse. Some of it is even in sonnets. And yet it has a polish that is far superior to anything in, say, "*A Comedy of Errors*", with the clowning of the two Dromio's, and the sheer doggerel of some of the early Histories. It must have been worked over, and worked over lovingly by Shakespeare. There are two distinct drafts of Lord Biron's great speech against the tyranny of love, both of which are usually included in the spoken text so that he says the same thing all over again. It contains the germ of many future plays. On even moderate guess-work, the Dark Lady appears for the first time in it—"with two pitch-black eyeballs stuck in her face" as a note of contempt and hatred. And it has in it some of the most quotable and mature fragments of all Shakespeare.

The Old Vic production is gay, extraordinarily decorative (thank Mr. Berkeley Sutcliffe), but much too long, for which do not thank Mr. Hugh Hunt, the director, who has, as is rare with him, failed in intelligence. Those endless plays upon words, those everlasting Latinisms between the Schoolmaster and the Curate, have absolutely nothing to say to a modern audience. It may be true that Shakespeare himself had, as Ben Jonson said, "small Latin and less Greek"—but then Jonson himself was a scholar and a pedant to end all pedants—and a certain amount of Latin was almost a *lingua franka* to anyone who had been to a board-school in Elizabethan days; and it is fair to assume that Shakespeare had at least as much Latin at the back of his mind, and allowing for Ben Jonson's captiousness, as to make the Latin of most modern sixth-form public schoolboys look silly. But we, a modern theatre audience, and not necessarily even sixth-form public schoolboys, have not even this much Latin, and the comic exchanges among the intelligentsia remain unintelligible to us. They should be cut. Miss Angela Baddeley as the Princess of France crystal clear in her articulation of the lovely lines. Miss Diana Churchill as Rosaline very much less so. Mr. Michael Redgrave as Lord Berowne very competent, but entirely lacking in the necessary fanatical spark, "the right Promethian fire", which Shakespeare himself suggests as necessary.

"*A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE*", hailed in America as a masterpiece, has a *bravura* part for Miss Vivienne Leigh as a girl of good family who has come down in the world, who has—to put it crudely—become a prostitute, and who is finally hauled off to an asylum. (The scene is set in New Orleans.) The play was directed by Sir Laurence Olivier, and the first-night had the air of being one of the most consequential in London for years. There had been more than three thousand applications for first-night tickets.

But the theatre must sooner or later come back to reality. The speaking was definitely bad. Sir Laurence himself on the stage has a trick of "throwing away" the last part of his sentences, in other words, speaking them in an undertone. In his own case, it doesn't matter. He has a voice with a "bite" in it that can carry to the back of the gallery, in whatever pitch he speaks, but this technique does not apply to the present company. Mr. Bonar Colleano was heard. So was Miss Renee Asherson. But in the case of Miss Vivienne Leigh one had to guess at the end of her muffled sentences; and guess-work is not entirely fair to the author.

CHECHOV'S "*The Seagull*" is so lovely a play that it deserves a notice to itself. It will probably be moving into central London from its present location at the Lyric, Hammersmith, and I will review it hereafter. But do not rely on this removal; go and see it now.

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM

Edited by CHRISTOPHER SYKES

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

IN an opening essay Mr. Somerset Maugham sets forth his aim in making public part of the note-books* which he has kept since the very beginning of his career. "I publish it", he says, "because I am interested in the technique of literary production and in the process of creation, and if such a volume as this by some other author came into my hands I should turn to it with avidity." Such a declaration must exclude direct criticism, since we are not asked to read his book as literature but as a record of the kind of observation which has enabled Somerset Maugham to become a master of narrative in a variety of literary forms. Beyond excision the original note-book form has been retained. We may find almost anything here: aphorisms, literary criticisms, portraits, records of incidents, travellers' tales, connected by a chronological order alone. We can thus follow not only the growth of a prodigious talent, but of the specialized technique which liberated its strength: the earlier entries bear little resemblance to anything to be found in his books, the later ones often read like passages in his novels and short stories.

The very varied contents of the note-book can be somewhat roughly divided into two categories: reflections on life and art, and descriptions of men, scenes and events. The reflections occupy a large part of the entries made in his young days, and include the very "shy-making" smartnesses of a bright young man, which, with singular honesty, he has included as examples of his earliest writing done in the period when the fashion of the epigram poisoned the literary atmosphere. These reflections continue but become rarer in his maturity. They do not often rise to the height of his observation of incident and character, though occasionally they do that with thrilling effect. Of these the best, in my opinion, is that in which he gives his reasons for not contributing to Gaullist magazines in England and America. It contains the stern judgment of a devoted but critical admirer of France. Few truer words have been spoken about the modern French predicament.

A surprisingly large number of these reflections are of a philosophical and religious turn. None of them is very good; there is a peevish tone in too many of them. He makes no secret of the fact that his first experience of religion repelled him, and this has apparently left him with an enduring aversion to Anglicanism in particular, of Christianity to some extent. We do not criticize these entries; we need only to consider what element they represent in his finished work. We remember then all those dreadful missionaries, and the Vicar in "Cakes and Ale". If we consider the missionary stories separately each one is of the highest excellence, yet, at the risk of being called prudish or inartistic, we may ask whether his wholly unfair picture of the Protestant clergy as a whole does not incur some blame in a writer who is famous for realism. Such strictures, if admitted, can only apply to the final impression, but it should be noted that they exclude the portrait of the aforementioned Vicar. We know from Somerset Maugham's own testimony that this portrait was drawn from a man whom he disliked not only personally but as the representative of a system, and yet the result shows no lack of balance or sympathy, and no prejudice. We laugh at the Vicar, but not contemptuously, because he is so wonderfully alive. It is even possible to disagree with the author and like the old monster, a fact

* *A Writer's Note-book.* W. Somerset Maugham. *Heinemann.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

which fairly indicates the shape of the problem.

When the element is portraiture we recognize that it has been thoroughly and finely translated from the raw material of experience, even of hopelessly embittered experience, into a work of art. But sometimes it is not portraiture, and though (to my recollection) he has nowhere in his finished work set down a plain avowal of the type of atheism record in his note-books, he has often indulged in reflections on life and destiny which evidently come from that source. With a few exceptions these are not successful. There are writers (Norman Douglas is one) for whom the loss of religious faith acts like a tonic, and from which they draw strength. Somerset Maugham is clearly not of their number; his abjuration of religion seems to have turned to cynicism, but only to increase his literary problems; for when he shows a cynical turn, he is not at home with his cynicism. The truth is that though cynicism appears in his writing he is not a cynic. There is a confusion easily made between cynicism and scepticism (one of his basic qualities), and also with that admirable impatience with humbug which is never absent from a single thing he has written. No cynic could have written "The Razor's Edge". Nor, it may be added, could a deeply religious man.

It is tempting to conclude from this that the generalizations contained in this book have only been of value when they have led to delineation of character, but to do this would be to underestimate Somerset Maugham's achievement essentially. There is a series of remarkable notes taken from meetings with Indians which occurs towards the end of the book, and into which there is thrown—presumably not by the accident of time—a devastatingly accurate description of a British general of the Empire. At the end of the Indian section comes this distressing but unhappily true note:

"Wellington is supposed to have said that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton. It may be that the historians of the future will say that Indi. was lost in the public schools of England."

Reflection of such generalizations, and of the wisdom which has caused them to be set in such an order as that in which they appear in this note-book, is in many of Somerset Maugham's writings and gives them much of their depth.

The real fun of this book, however—and why should we be shy of seeking fun, since Maugham has never despised the arts of entertainment—is to be found in the descriptions of men and events, in numerous entries which have either served to jog memory, seal impressions, or preserve creative impulses for anecdotal use. Those who have never read Somerset Maugham—they must be a small and very youthful band—would be ill-advised to commence their studies with this book. They should start—well, they can start anywhere; they would do best to take pins and shut their eyes, and find a title that way. But for the majority, who are familiar with Somerset Maugham's work, this book is an enchantment. Very soon the reader finds himself indulging in a game of trying to relate these notes to literary results, and he may be surprised to discover that he can very rarely do this with any certainty. I searched in vain for notes which had served as raw material for one of the best English stories ever written, "The Alien Corn", but there is nothing here which can be detected as such. Of course, these particular notes may have been unprintable, but I would not be the least surprised to learn that the original notes are without any recognizable relationship.

His famous story "Rain" began with three notes which are classified. They are not outstanding or particularly arresting notes: why did they form a basic structure so strong that a masterpiece could be built on it? Among the very best things in this book are the notes on Russia. He knows the language, has a considerable knowledge of Russian literature, and witnessed the first phase of the Revolution. The notes are highly stimulating to the

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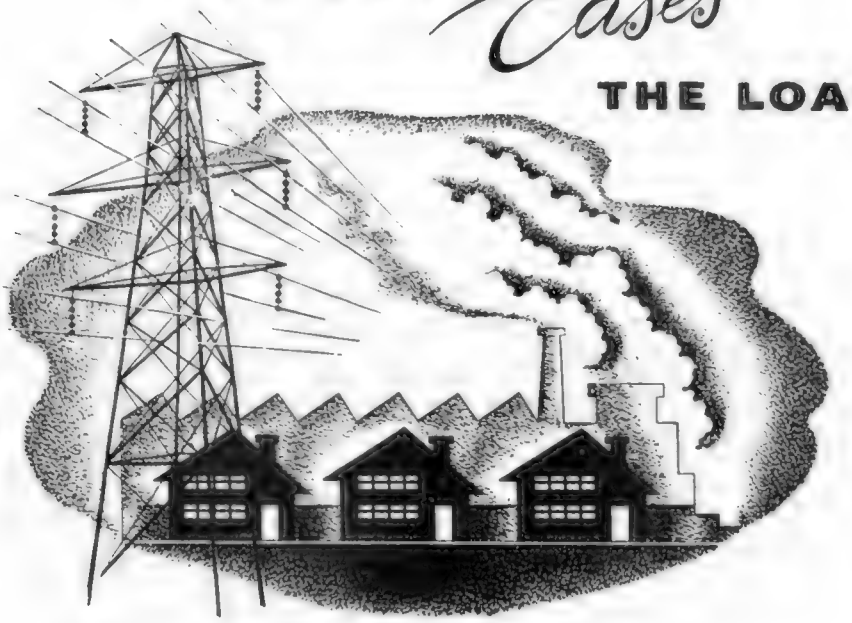

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imagination. And yet in his very large output he has written almost nothing about Russia. Why? He has the following curious note:

"A week or two ago someone related an incident to me with the suggestion that I should write a story on it, and since then I have been thinking it over. I don't see what to do. The incident is as follows. Two young fellows were working on a tea plantation in the hills and the mail had to be fetched from a good way off, so that they only got it at rather long intervals. One of the young fellows, A, used to get a lot of letters by every mail, ten or twelve, but the other, B, never got one. He used to watch A enviously as he took his bundle and started to read, he hankered to have a letter, just one letter, and one day, when they were expecting the mail, he said to A: 'Look here, you always have a packet of letters and I never get any. I'll give you five pounds if you'll let me have one of yours.' 'Right-ho,' said A, and when the mail came in he handed B his letters and said to him, 'Take whichever you like.' B gave him a five-pound note, looked over the letters, chose one, and returned the rest. In the evening, when they were having a whisky and soda after dinner, A asked casually: 'By the way, what was that letter about?' 'I'm not telling you,' said B. A, somewhat taken aback, said: 'Well, who was it from?' 'That's my business,' answered B. They had a bit of an argument, but B stood on his rights and refused to say anything about the letter that he had bought. A began to fret, and as the weeks went by he did all he could to persuade B to let him see the letter. B continued to refuse. At length A, anxious, worried, curious, felt he couldn't bear it any longer, so he went to B and said: 'Look here, here's your five pounds, let me have my letter back again.' 'Not on your life,' said B. 'I bought and paid for it, it's my letter and I'm not going to give it up.' "

One would suppose that in the hands of Somerset Maugham such material could be turned into a fine story with comparative ease. He repeats that he could see nothing that he could do with it.

There is an entry describing an accident on a river which reappears little changed as the central incident in that disturbing story "The Yellow Streak". There is another recording how he met a reformed drunkard and his wife, whom most Maugham readers will recognize in a flash. He attaches the following agreeable (although hardly necessary) note: "I never saw them again and they never knew what they had let themselves in for when they came to dinner that night. They suggested to me a story which I called "Before the Party". These directly related notes are rare.

On reaching the end of the note-book one is left with the impression that whereas this author has usually worked at some distance from his material, he can sometimes achieve his best effects by acting as a "straight" reporter; that unpromising material has yielded him great harvests, notably in the case of "Rain"; and that some of the most promising material, his Russian notes and the tale of the letters, has failed him. From all this we can only conclude once again that the literary impulse is utterly incalculable, and that ancient explanations in terms of demonology, though superstitious, were well in accord with the observable facts. All the psychologists in the world are unlikely to tell us very much about it.

More than ten years ago Mr. Somerset Maugham took farewell of his readers in that curious autobiographical book, "The Summing Up". Since then he has written ten further books of varying lengths. He concludes the present volume with a brief essay in which he reaffirms his agnostic faith, and once more says goodbye. Remembering what followed before we may reasonably hope for something more from his pen, but if this is not to be, if this really is goodbye, let us say "Thank you".

BENJAMIN CONSTANT AND MADAME DE STAEL

BENJAMIN CONSTANT. By Harold Nicolson. *Constable.* 18s.

NO scholar loses caste in England by blunders about the Alps or theology, and nobody will therefore think the worse of Mr. Nicolson for giving Saussure the credit (in 1780) for bringing mountains into fashion, or for informing us that Madame de Stael was brought up "in the principles of the Swiss Protestant Church". It was the publication of the *Nouvelle Heloise* in 1760 which accelerated an existing change of taste so far as mountains are concerned, Saussure was primarily an interpreter of mountain geology rather than of mountain sentiment. Madame de Stael was not brought up in the tenets of Zwingli, the Swiss, but of Calvin the Frenchman. In the eighteenth century there was no Swiss currency, Swiss law, nor Swiss army and neither now nor then was there a "Swiss Protestant Church".

It is a pity that Mr. Nicolson should disfigure the appearance of his pages by breaking up his attractive prose by horrid little numerals. All that is necessary is to urge the reader in the preface not to neglect his admirable notes. And as so much of this book consists of long extracts from Constant's letters why should these be printed in a disagreeable small type?

That concludes my grouses. And now for my gratitude. This book is not only a brilliant study of individuals, notably Constant and Madame de Stael, but also a fascinating reconstruction of an age, the *douceur de la vie* of pre-Revolutionary France, and the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods. Benjamin Constant (1767-1839) belonged by birth to an aristocratic Swiss family. He disliked and renounced Switzerland, and died a French citizen. He obtained a divorce from his first wife, was for many years the reluctant captive of Madame de Stael, married a German aristocrat, played a part in French politics,

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wrote one small masterpiece, Adolphe, and a ponderous work on religion in several volumes which was a failure.

Constant was temperamentally adolescent. He was reckless and improvident, a gambler, contemptible in his subservience to Madame de Stael, and apparently devoid of the talents indispensable for a political career. And yet we find him received with respect by Napoleon who was prepared to adopt many of the articles in his draft constitution, and who appointed him as one of a commission of five to treat for an armistice after Waterloo. Mr. Nicolson does not solve, and indeed hardly seems aware of the problem raised by Constant's intermittent prominence as a politician. There are two clues which help us to understand how he managed to be taken seriously as a politician. First he was a brilliant pamphleteer and secondly he possessed a virtue, which has a certain scarcity value in politics, complete integrity. Even his most disconcerting and rapid changes of front were inspired by genuine changes of conviction. He was a man of immense courage both physical and moral, qualities which are not always associated with intellectuals of progressive tendencies. He fought twenty duels and was wholly innocent of that *trahison des clercs* which is the besetting weakness of intellectuals, paying court to Kings in one age and King Demos in the next. He had little humour but great irony, an irony often inspired by his own actions. He tells us that he had often suddenly become bored by the solemnity involved in sustaining a dramatic action (suicide for instance) "and have reacted by myself destroying the situation which I have planned". Other examples of irony rather than humour may be quoted. On leaving England he sent a dog to an English friend of his who had treated him badly with the hope that as he had treated his friend like a dog, he would treat the dog as a friend. His formula from parting from a mistress is attractive. "In my detachment from you there is something which would make one of the most beautiful attachments one could conceive." And I liked his remark "one feels pretty dry when one has been devastated by the lava of Madame de Stael for twenty years".

Best of all was his comment when a friend congratulated him on the fact that Louis XVIII had deleted with his own royal hand the name of Constant's list from those to be exiled. Constant had deserted the royalists for Napoleon but Louis read and was much amused by Constant's apologia. "You seem," said a friend, "to have convinced the King"—"That does not surprise me," said Constant, "I almost convinced myself".

The portrait of Madame de Stael in this book is brilliant. There must have been something noble about a woman of whom it can be said that "she never kept an enemy or forgot a friend". Her relations with Napoleon are fascinating. She applied to him her famous battering tactics, and even penetrated into his bedroom. He shouted to her that he was undressed. "What matters that?" she replied,

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"Genius is always clothed." She was a very masculine character. Both she and Talleyrand (disguised as Madame de Vernon) appear in her novel *Corinne*. "It seems," said Talleyrand, "that Madame de Stael has written a novel in which both she and I are introduced disguised as women". Another of Talleyrand's *bon mots* sums up the essential tragedy of the Progressives who hate tyranny but who, as the great Basle historian Burkhardt wrote, "open the doors and level the paths for the terrible masses everywhere". "Madame de Stael" said Talleyrand, "approved of the 18th Fructidor; but not of the 19th".

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are not held up for our admiration. They are indeed, the parasites of the title, the selfish, charming creatures who extract, from a willing audience, far more than their rather second-rate talents are worth. Maria is an actress in not very distinguished plays; her stepbrother Niall is a composer of popular dance music; they prey upon everybody, including each other. There is some excellent comedy, a nice dash of psychology and, like "good theatre" the book has at least a fugitive credibility. The moral is put forward with just enough earnestness to persuade the reader that a very enjoyable experience has also been an elevating one, but do not let us crab the book. Of its kind it is an absolutely first-class performance.

MISS DU MAURIER'S novel shows no cleavage between conception and characterization. Mr. Haakon Chevalier's, unfortunately, does. His theme is serious, the attempt to organize the Californian fruit pickers in the teeth of militant opposition. The method is adroit; a cannery tycoon, Steve Callaban is murdered, and three people—his wife, her lover and the labour organizer—are tried over a course of years for the crime. By this means some twenty years of American social history are brought under review and the author does some good, if rather heavy-handed journalese in his descriptions of intrigues and strike riots. But the characters themselves are conceived on the level of the American popular novel, and nobody could get up the slightest interest in what happens to them.

FRANK SARGESSON'S novel about a boy in a small New Zealand town would have been better had the author not been carried away by the child's eye method, thus inflicting upon us an unremitting reporting of trivia with slabs from the subconscious. The second part of the book, in which the young man is sheep shearing on an outback station, is better and there is a fine description of a catastrophic flood at the end. The shapelessness and lack of selection, however, vitiates the author's usual ability to convey atmosphere and the personal experience is somehow reduced in significance.

MARIAM is a novel about the Italo-Abyssinian war and very skilfully, within the story, one of the perpetual moral problems of conquest is raised, the question whether the higher level of civilization does not always destroy something irreplaceably valuable in the lower. The hero is an anonymous Italian officer,who through an accident is constrained to kill a native woman with whom he has had an affair. Henceforward she haunts him; physically in the growing fear that he has contracted leprosy from her, morally to a degree in which he comes to feel the "guilt" of the expedition attached to himself. There is a remarkable brooding power in this book and a strong dramatic story. Its descriptions alone would make it worth reading.

THE late Mrs. Belloc Lowndes had the command of a certain style in her writing, the manner of one who knew the world though she chose to be reticent about it. Her posthumous book is an attempt to vindicate the Empress Eugenie from the charges of self-seeking and frivolity, on the basis of information privately conveyed to the writer in her youth. The thesis is that Eugenie was genuinely in love with Louis Napoleon, though she could never understand his sensual temperament and that her influence was always exerted honestly in the interests of her adopted people, whom she deeply loved. It is all rather *exalté*, and even if it is accepted, the fact remains that Eugenie, like many exceptionally beautiful women was fundamentally stupid and therefore politically dangerous, while as a human study she is far less interesting than her husband

I HAD never heard of Charles Louis Philippe's *Marie Donadieu*, though the author's talents were long ago praised by Gide. This book appears in a translation by Violet Hudson which, although sometimes excessively literal, does convey something of the freshness and colour which would appear to distinguish the original writing. The story is a favourite with French authors, the introduction of an eager young girl to the conduct of love affairs and Professor Saurat's parallel with Manon is not inapt. The writer's great gift is his power to convey the sense of enjoyment of small pleasures, a spring day, a walk through the streets; and he can present a potentially sordid story with a quality of natural innocence so that the untruthful and unfaithful Marie seems as blameless as a picture by Renoir.

RUBY MILLAR.

NEW JUDGMENTS

EARLIER DIPLOMATIC HISTORY, 1492–1713. By Sir Charles Petrie, Bt. *Hollis and Carter*. 18*s*.

IT is a pleasure to welcome this account of the diplomatic history of England and Europe between the end of the Middle Ages and the Treaty of Utrecht, for its merits are comparable with those which marked Sir Charles Petrie's companion volume on the diplomacy of the modern age. The subject is confused and complex; the book itself is well proportioned and carefully planned.

The treatment throughout is factual rather than didactic, and if its readers may sometimes feel overwhelmed with detail, they will have no cause to complain that the past is being presented to them by means of modern propaganda disguised as history. This author shows himself refreshingly aware that the age-long interactions between mind and power are not to be over simplified to meet the need of some modern ideology.

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Perhaps for a similar reason, Sir Charles allows himself some impatience with the generalizations of some Whig historians, and it is probably in connection with his English chapters that his book will be most subjected to criticism. But it is, at any rate, stimulating to be informed that the foreign policy of Cromwell was a failure, and that that of Charles II was "always conducted in accordance with the interests of the nation as a whole".

It is, however, not only students of history who will find this book interesting. It should prove of substantial value to students of international affairs who know, or who in these days need to be taught, that the relations between European States are not to be understood apart from the complex process which brought them into being, and which in former times governed their policy towards each other.

DAVID DOUGLAS.

MYSTICISM AND PHILOSOPHY

JACOB BOEHME: STUDIES IN HIS LIFE AND TEACHING. By Hans L. Martensen. Translated from the Danish by T. Rhys Evans. With Notes and Appendices by Stephen Hobhouse. *Rockliffe*. 21*s*.

THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN. By Nicolas Berdyaev. *Geoffery Bles*. 18*s*.

NICOLAS BERDYAEV, whom Mr. Hobhouse rightly calls "probably the chief mystical philosopher of our time", died recently with the notes before him for his next projected book in which he contemplated "returning to my deepest inspiration, the mysticism of Jacob Boehme". He also wrote to Mr. Hobhouse in 1936, "I love Boehme extremely . . . His idea of the passion and suffering of God is very central to me".

Mr. Hobhouse, well known for his study of the English mystic William Law, has much enriched Mr. Rhys Evans's translation of the Danish Primate's work on Boehme which was published in 1882, and reading Boehme in the original as well as the German translation of Martensen's book, he has done much to clarify Mr. Evans's translation.

In his distinction between the "Godhead" and the "creative God" who derives from it, Boehme is reminiscent of Plotinus who held that God could not know himself. At Boehme's *Ungrund*, the "dark centre of God", the primal "abyss", there is an ungrounded *unoriginated Will*. To become manifested to Himself as the Living God, God has been obliged to found an eternal distinction, an eternal contrast in Himself. Herein we finds roots of ideas developed by Schopenhauer in his doctrine of an unconscious will at the base of the *Ding an sich* and by Hegel in his dialectic. At first God is the Still Mystery, is only universal Will, the Will of unity, the mystical freedom which at root wills nothing, and can become a definite Will only through the agency of Nature. Then one may say the trouble begins. At this point Boehme becomes linked with Christian theology, the freedom of man to love God, from whom his freedom is derivative, or to reject Him. This is manifested in the Incarnation, the crucifixion and the redemption. Boehme emphasizes that although we can but see all these phases successively in time, they are events in enternity in which past, present and future are co-present, "the lamb slain from the foundation of the world".

In teaching that hell is everlasting, Boehme unflinchingly adheres to old Christian doctrine. Martensen disagrees with him, and one of Mr. Hobhouse's appendices is specially devoted to this question, pointing out that the scriptual texts need not imply the doctrine, since *αἰώνιον*, meaning of the ages, is an indeterminate phrase. Berdyaev has most strongly condemned the belief in a hell of infinite duration, pointing out that it derives from an objectivation of time as we understand it. Much of Boehme may be related to Berdyaev's teaching that the created world is a free co-operation of God and man, indeed a

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colaboration. "There are two natures, the divine and the human, which are not to be identified. But both these natures are in the divine Trinity", says Berdyaev. This does not mean that God is less immanent than transcendent. Berdyaev also denies that Boehme was fundamentally pantheistic, as has been alleged, saying "Mysticism is often accused of pantheism, and on this account is frequently mishandled . . . It must be said that when pantheism is actually present, it is not so much a heresy about God as a heresy about man, a diminution of the significance of man, a diminution of the rôle of human freedom and human creativeness".

As mystic and philosopher Boehme and Berdyaev are strangely complementary.

BRIAN LUNN.

THE THREATENED CLASS

THE ENGLISH MIDDLE CLASSES. By Roy Lewis and Angus Maude. *Phoenix House.* 15*s.*

"ENGLAND has now no aristocracy, no upper class"; thus for the purposes of their excellent study the authors may be said to define the middle classes as those not engaged in manual work. In a style admirably clear, they examine exhaustively yet entertainingly the rise of the middle classes, their contemporary divisions, their common plight, and their chances of survival. By insight, analysis, apt quotation and documentation, the authors have presented us with a warning, eminently fair, of what may well happen to a class unable in its lack of homogeneity to recognize its common interest in the maintenance of those principles which make for individual freedom within a state. Not only are "middle-class interests" distinct in many cases from "working-class interests", but within the middle classes there are worlds of difference between the interests of, say, the professional class, farmers and public servants. Thus no one political party can be said to represent all middle-class strata, to which has been added by nationalization a new group of public officials sensitively conscious that their jobs, their livelihood, their hope of remaining in the middle classes, depend entirely on continued Socialist domination. Despite the divisions militating against their survival, the pride forbidding the upper strata to complain, the clamour of the lower for increased "social justice", the authors yet contend that "England will somehow manage to remain a middle-class nation". Many readers, however, insufficiently reassured, may ask themselves the question posed on the jacket—"Shall I Emigrate?"

BASIL HARVEY.

TITO'S APOLOGIST

EASTERN APPROACHES. By Fitzroy Maclean. *Jonathan Cape*, pp. 543. 15*s. net.*

FAR too many reporters' books are being thrown on the market. Mr. Maclean is not a reporter by profession. He was a diplomat before the war and a soldier during the war. But his book is a reporter's book of average—very average—merit. His accounts of what he saw in many countries would have been suitable for a popular newspaper, but they are hardly worth publishing as a book. He witnessed the famous trial in which Bucharin, Krestinski, and others were accused of impossible crimes. His report of the trial is quite a good piece of journalism, but it adds nothing to our knowledge.

His name is widely associated with that of Marshal Tito, for he was appointed head of the British Mission at the Marshal's headquarters. His report on this episode explains much although, or rather because, it tells us nothing. It is devastating in its superficiality. But it proved that the British Mission was duped by Tito from beginning to end. Mr. Maclean knew nothing, and learnt nothing, about the situation as it was in Yugoslavia then—and he does not appear to have learnt anything since.

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He repeats all the untruths as half-truths that have been so thoroughly exposed with regard to General Mihailovitch—the untruth, for example, that Mihailovitch did not fight. He is uncritical in the use of the word Chetniks, a generic and traditional term for insurgents, and does not appear to have heard of the *Home Army* which, under the command of General Mihailovitch, was the legitimate successor of the Royal Yugoslav Army. He gives no evidence to show that Marshal Tito's *Partisans* were of any military value in the war against Germany. He does not appear to realize that Tito subordinated the fight against the Germans to his fight against Mihailovitch, whereas Mihailovitch, to the utmost of his ability, subordinated the fight which Tito and the *Partisans* forced upon him, to his fight against the Germans.

That Great Britain made a terrible mistake in supporting Tito and abandoning Mihailovitch is no longer to be seriously disputed. Because of this mistake, she and America are not on the Danube to-day. Because of this mistake, Greece is still at war.

Mr. Churchill, to his honour, has some notion that a mistake was made and feels some regret. Mr. Maclean appears to have no notion whatever and to feel no regret, although—or because—he was largely responsible, seeing that Mr. Churchill's decision with regard to Tito was largely influenced by the reports of the British Mission. There is not a hint in Mr. Maclean's book of the human tragedy and the avoidable political disaster in which he played so lamentable a part.

F. A. VOIGT.

WHALE-HUNTING

AIR WHALER. By John Grierson. *Sampson Low, Marston & Co.* 18*s.*

IF anybody could make a good case for modern whale-hunting, it is Mr. Grierson, author of *Jet Flight*, and Flight-Commodore of the Whale Factory Ship *Balaena*. The book is a day-by-day account (much of it is diary) of the 1946-47 whaling season in the Antarctic, as seen from the *Balaena* and from the planes catapulted from the *Balaena* in order to spot the whales and make it quicker to kill them. But all this intricate and costly investment towards extermination of a valuable animal raises the question: instead of exterminating the whale, why don't we domesticate him? The question is difficult.

Mr. Grierson, as an air whaler, had a job to do, and did it superbly. Of the whaling industry, so far as he sees into it, he writes with less pride than he does about the troops who do the job. What is appealing, and relevant to the question, is that he is on the side of not liking the job very much.

F. V. MORLEY.

AN ADMIRER'S CONFESSION

SHAW. By C. E. M. Joad. *Gollancz.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

DR. JOAD discusses Shaw's thought from the point of view of a member of the generation upon which its impact was strongest, the generation which matured before 1914. He gives a very clear explanation of why it had such an intoxicating effect and of why the effect wore off. He traces the changes in the world which made it seem less relevant and enticing and also explains how the physical differences between himself and Shaw account for some of the differences in their views. All this makes an odd but very readable book. Dr. Joad is a brilliant journalist and perhaps the most influential popular educator since Baden-Powell. Inevitably he looks back a little sadly to the days when he was a philosopher and not merely a popularizer of the pleasures of thought.

His criticism of Vitalism and of Shaw's lack of aim in the later plays, if not very profound is at least as profound as the subject makes necessary. He is particularly convincing on the contradictions involved in the theory that the Life Force which created the Universe develops mind and purpose as it evolves. Dr.

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Joad does not quite succeed in explaining Shaw's fondness for dictators. Hitler had none of the qualities that Shaw in his prime admired, except the self-confidence he considered one of the attributes of greatness. If the Life Force chose Hitler in the first place as its instrument, why did he fail?

R. G. G. PRICE.

THE TENNYSON SAGA

ALFRED TENNYSON. By his grandson Charles Tennyson. *Macmillan.* 30*s.*

THIS very bulky biography—nearly six-hundred pages of it—is a monument to family piety. Sir Charles Tennyson hardly attempts any fresh critical estimate of his grandfather, either as man or as poet. He is happy in the knowledge that the latter's reputation, after undergoing the usual vicissitudes which have overtaken each of the great Victorians in the generations following their deaths, is once more on the wax. Sir Charles takes the opportunity of recording in print numerous details about the poet and his circle, derived from family tradition and hitherto unpublished letters, to which he has a unique opportunity of access. There is no longer any need for us to be shamefaced about our affectionate delight in Tennyson's exquisitely wrought verse, and in his peculiarly individual turns of imagination and fancy. But the sterner sort of criticism, I think, will never again quite whole-heartedly be able to impute to him supreme greatness. But he *looked* like a great poet—both physically, and, to his own age, spiritually. Sir Charles Tennyson fills in the details of the background of the legend. Not all the facts which he recounts are directly relevant to the understanding of Tennyson or of his work. But the picture, derived from first-hand documents, of the mental and social climate of the age, which he presents, would be interesting and valuable, even if it referred to a quite ordinary and undistinguished family history. The Tennyson family was certainly not an ordinary or an undistinguished one. It was deeply rooted in the local traditions of Lincolnshire. It manifested, moreover, an intense individuality, not untinged with neurosis. These traits, so eminently characteristic of Alfred Tennyson himself are to be discerned working themselves out also in the lives of his father and grandfather, and in his brothers and sisters. Two of his brothers, Frederick and Charles, were significant minor poets in their own right. Charles' sonnets indeed, frequently show qualities of feeling and imagination which were by no means surpassed by his more famous brother—though Charles falls far short of Alfred in technical skill. In other members of the family a certain morbid sensibility, finding no such creative outlet, produced a curious series of variations of vicissitude in their careers. Into such matters Mr. Charles Tennyson is able to give us a great deal of insight. The whole book presents a fascinating tapestry, made up of tangled threads of heredity and environment.

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS.

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